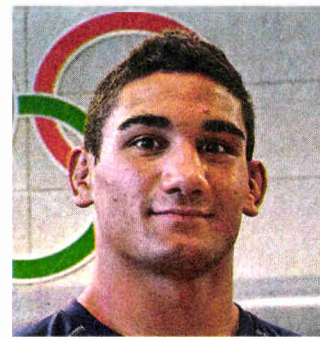


PLYMOUTH OBSERVER

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CANTON, U-M GRAD HEADING TO WORLD JUNIORS
SPORTS, B1



PLYMOUTH DISTRICT LIBRARY
Sisters Cassidy and Genevieve Grzebyk frequently ride bicycles to the Plymouth District Library, which is installing a self-serve bike repair station, called a Fixit, near the bike racks, thanks to grants from the Plymouth Lions Club and Serene Landscape Group.

Library to celebrate renovations, new features

Matt Jachman
Staff Writer

A new public bicycle repair station to be unveiled Saturday is the newest facet of an 18-month, \$3 million renovation project at the Plymouth District Library. The Fixit, a self-service station with tools commonly used for bike repairs, a tire pump and a stand on which to set a bike while repairs are being made, is being installed near the bike racks at the library's main entrance. The roughly \$3,000 project is being funded by grants from the Plymouth Lions Club and the Serene Landscape Group, which is based in Plymouth. "Our bike racks are busy, almost year-round," Carol Souchock, library director, said in a press release. "This is a perfect way for us to serve the folks coming to the library and into downtown



DERO
The Fixit includes tools commonly used for bicycle repairs, a tire pump and a stand on which to set a bike while repairs are made.

Plymouth." The library will host a ribbon-cutting for the Fixit — and for library renovations that are nearing completion — at 11 a.m. Saturday at the

entrance. Library renovations included a new roof, a new heating, ventilation and air-

See FIXIT, Page A2

Treasurer race pits challenger, incumbent

Incumbent Ron Edwards and challenger Mark Clinton are competing in the Republican primary to be Plymouth Township's treasurer for the next four years. Edwards, 60, is in his fifth term as treasurer, having been elected to his first term in 1996. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration and a background as a certified public accountant. Clinton, 57, is a regional director of sales operations, strategy and planning for Cisco Systems and has been in executive management and financial positions for more than 30 years. He has a bache-

lor's degree in mathematics and a master's of business administration. The winner of the Republican primary will face Mary Siefert, a Democrat with more than 30 years of municipal finance experience, in the November general election. Siefert has no opposition in the primary. The job of treasurer pays nearly \$105,000 a year, plus benefits. Edwards and Clinton recently answered written questions on township issues from the Plymouth Observer; their answers are published here.

Edwards: 'I will work to keep Plymouth Township first'

Q: Describe your understanding of the role of the township treasurer and explain how you would work to fulfill that role.

A: The statutory duties of the treasurer are by state statute. They consist of collecting real and personal property taxes, collecting all revenues of the township and depositing them in approved depositories, collecting delinquent personal property taxes, issuing the checks for all expenditures, investing the funds of the township, and responsibility for jeopardy assessments in collecting property taxes. As a board member, you're one of seven individuals responsible for the direction of

the township. I will work to keep Plymouth Township first. Plymouth Township has become one of the premier communities to live in the state of Michigan and the country. By keeping are taxes low, water and sewer rates affordable, having a safe community and providing quality of life amenities we will continue to do so.



Edwards

Q: What would be your strategy for addressing the township's retiree pension and

See EDWARDS, Page A2

Clinton: Township behind in addressing legacy costs

Q: Describe your understanding of the role of the township treasurer and explain how you would work to fulfill that role.

A: The role of the treasurer is quite simply to collect, invest and disburse tax dollars. These duties should be performed with total transparency and accountability. Another equally important component of the treasurer role is being a member of the seven person township board. In an ideal situation, the board would be comprised of seven inde-

pendent thinkers with the ability to analyze data, solve problems and reach sound decisions with the best interests of Plymouth Township residents in mind. Early in the campaign I made a pledge which I intend to uphold throughout my term of office. I promise to restore profession-



Clinton

See CLINTON, Page A3

Two incumbents booked for Plymouth District Library board race

Matt Jachman
Staff Writer

Voters in Plymouth Township and Plymouth will pick three Plymouth District Library trustees — or maybe just two — in the November general election. The terms of three members of the seven-person Board of Trustees are expiring at the

end of the year, but with only two incumbents seeking re-election and no other candidates having filed as of Tuesday, the third spot may have to be filled through an appointment process. Would-be candidates still have until Thursday, July 21, to sign up for the race, by filing an affidavit of identity and a non-partisan nominating pet-

ition, or a \$100 fee, with Wayne County Clerk Cathy Garrett's office. Petitions, if candidates go that route, should include the signatures of at least 40, but no more than 100, people who are registered to vote in either the city or the township. Board Vice President Mary Maguire said she's been scouting for possible board candidates. She hopes one steps up

before the deadline. "We'll just keep looking around for good people and maybe there's someone out there who just hasn't filed yet," she said. Maguire is seeking a second board term, while Trustee Jacqueline George is seeking a third. First-term Trustee Nancy Anderson, elected in 2012, said Tuesday that she is not

running for re-election because of other commitments. Maguire and George both said they'd like to continue the board's progress of the past few years, which includes hiring library director Carol Souchock in 2013 and an extensive, \$3 million renovation project that's nearing completion.

See LIBRARY, Page A2



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FIXIT

Continued from Page A1

conditioning system, a new ice-melt system for the stairs, porch and handicapped ramp at the main entrance and a revamped entrance and porch. The vestibule at the main entrance has been redone and an art tile project, privately funded, is scheduled to

"Our bike racks are busy, almost year-round. This is a perfect way for us to serve the folks coming to the library and into downtown Plymouth."

CAROL SOUCHOCK
library director

be installed there later this year.

Saturday's celebration will feature an introduction to the Fixit and dem-

onstrations on how to use it by members of the Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society, which regularly meets at the library to start bike rides in the Plymouth area.

There will also be refreshments, live music by harpist Brittany DeYoung and the opportunity for children to make personalized license plates.

Plymouth Lions club president Gary Kerstens said the club annually

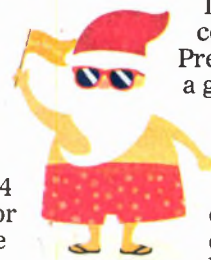
makes a donation to the library, without specifying how it should be used, but that the Fixit is a worthy project because of bicycle use among library patrons and the fact that cyclists congregate there before beginning leisure rides.

The installation of the Fixit comes after Plymouth's Downtown Development Authority, with the help of a grant from the Wilcox Foundation, recently installed additional bike racks throughout the downtown area. Downtown Plymouth now has 75 official parking spots at which cyclists can lock up their bikes.

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Christmas in July offers prizes

Try your luck at our holiday icon contest as part of the Christmas in July special section. Search carefully each page in the July 21 edition for the holiday icon pictured here. Then fill out the entry form found on page 4 of the section or go online to the Facebook link at hometownlife.com.



Winners will be selected in a random drawing of all correct entries.

Winners can select from a long list of cool prizes, including a \$75

gift certificate from Michael's Lamp Shop; a \$50 gift certificate for whitening strips from Dolores J. Baran D.D.S.; a \$50 gift certificate from Premier Pet Supply; a gift basket from TranquilTea; a \$50 gift certificate from Kramer Jewelry; or a \$50 gift certificate from Metals in Time. Ten others will receive Buddy's pizza coupons.

So put on those shades, find a magnifying glass and have fun. Deadline to enter is midnight Tuesday, Aug. 2.

PLYMOUTH OBSERVER

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EDWARDS

Continued from Page A1

health-care benefits over the long term?

A: The strategy is already in place. We have through contract negotiations eliminated defined-benefit pensions for all new hires. For current employees already in the plan we have increased their contribution from 7 percent to 10 percent. This has lowered the amount the township is responsible for.

For retiree health care all employees pay 20 percent of the premium and when they reach 65 years of age they go on Medicare coverage. They also go on an advantage plan or receive a stipend to pay for additional insurance that Medicare does not cover. This has reduced the liability by \$12 million dollars over the last eight years. The current yearly cost is

approximately \$600,000 for retiree health care and is budgeted.

Q: Much has been said about the current board's relationship with some elements of the community, and about poor relationships between some board members. How would you, as treasurer, work toward being able to disagree more agreeably, and toward gaining the respect of all voters, even those who speak up to oppose board actions?

A: I have always worked to be accessible and transparent. I have listened to citizens that don't agree with me in a respectful manner. Even when they are unable to come to the office I have been invited to their homes to address their concerns. We sometimes disagree but we still talk to one another the next time we see each other. I have made quite a few

friends over the years by this approach. As to citizens that oppose board actions that does not bother me. Most of my friends don't agree with me on everything. But you're never going to gain the respect of everyone.

Q: Name your top two priorities for Plymouth Township and briefly describe how, as treasurer and a board member, you would go about addressing those priorities.

A: The top priority is to keep Plymouth Township first. We have developed one of the best communities in Michigan and we need to keep it that way. By working with adjoining communities like Canton and Northville townships we can further share services to save funds and enhance the services. We already share mutual aid and sewage treatment services.

The second priority is to have the city of Plymouth honor past agreements with the township. They left the joint fire department operation and are trying to renegotiate what they owe. We need to make them honor their commitment they made.

Q: What is your view of the Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex becoming a public, taxpayer-supported entity for Plymouth and Plymouth Township residents? What is your view of recent improvements to township recreation facilities, especially Plymouth Township Park?

A: I don't believe (PARC) is a viable for taxpayers. Southeastern Michigan communities that have built performing arts/recreation centers have sold or ceased operations due to the tax burden. The city should buy it and enhance the fields and develop commercial/residential.

The Palace, DTE Energy Music Theatre, Meadowbrook and the Fox Theater are all privately operated. PARC is privately operated now, and it should stay that way. Government needs to stay out of funding performing arts centers.

I think (recreation improvements) have added to the value of the community and received high regards from most citizens. The pathways and bridges add to the walkability of the park. The repairs to the sprayscape were required. The parking lot has received rave reviews due to eliminating parking issues. And the pavilion is loved by all.

LIBRARY

Continued from Page A1

The renovations included a new roof, a new heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system and a new snow-melt system for the steps, porch and handicapped ramp at the entrance.

"It was very badly in need of renovations, repairs, upgrading and to bring it in line with what our citizens expect," Maguire said.

The library trustees elected — or appointed — this year will join board President Kimberly Hickey, Secretary Brian Anderson (no relation to Nancy Anderson) and Trustee Mike Pappas, who were elected to four-year terms in 2014.

The library's collection totaled more than 260,000 items in 2013 and just over 899,000 items were circulated from the library last year. Its annual operating budget is just over \$3.4 million and its debt-service budget about \$521,000.

The library relies on a tax of 1.6 mills, or \$1.60 for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value, as its main revenue source. The tax means the owners of a house with a taxable value of \$125,000 (the same house would have a market value of \$250,000 or more) pay \$200 a year toward the library.

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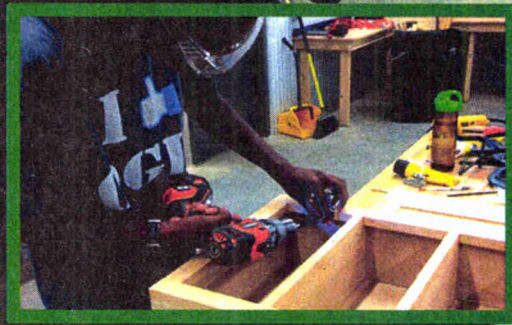
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From farm to fair: Sun, Water & Seeds

Susan Bromley
Staff Writer

There was no crying over spilled milk by Journey Phillips on Friday at Tollgate Farm in Novi.

Instead, she laughed in surprise after the goat she was milking stepped in the bucket.

The experience was a new one for the 9-year-old from West Bloomfield, as well as her cousin, Bryce Napier, 9, visiting from Ft. Knox, Ky. "It's weird at first, but it's really fun," Bryce said. "The only thing I wish is that I had my own goat so I could have the milk. I love milk."

The human kids mingled with goat kids, sheep, chickens and cattle July 8, just hours before some of the animals would make their way to the Oakland County Fair, which runs through July 17 at Springfield Oaks County Park, 12451 Anderson-

ville Road, Davisburg. The Sun, Water & Seeds 4-H Club, which Mary Hutka has led since 2010, is different from other 4H clubs in Oakland County as it meets at a 160-acre farm in the midst of a city. The setting allows easier access to farm life for urban and suburban children.

"They are gonna have an opportunity for hands-on experience with agriculture," Hutka, a Novi resident, said as she gazes around an expansive barnyard with surrounding fields and gardens beyond. "Look around — it's gorgeous and fun. You can have a wealth of experiences, a great education — the best you can get in animals. I live in suburbia. How else do you get this close to cows, except in Meijer?"

The club has about 20 members, each of whom pays what Hutka said is a "dirt cheap" \$10 annual fee and with that gets

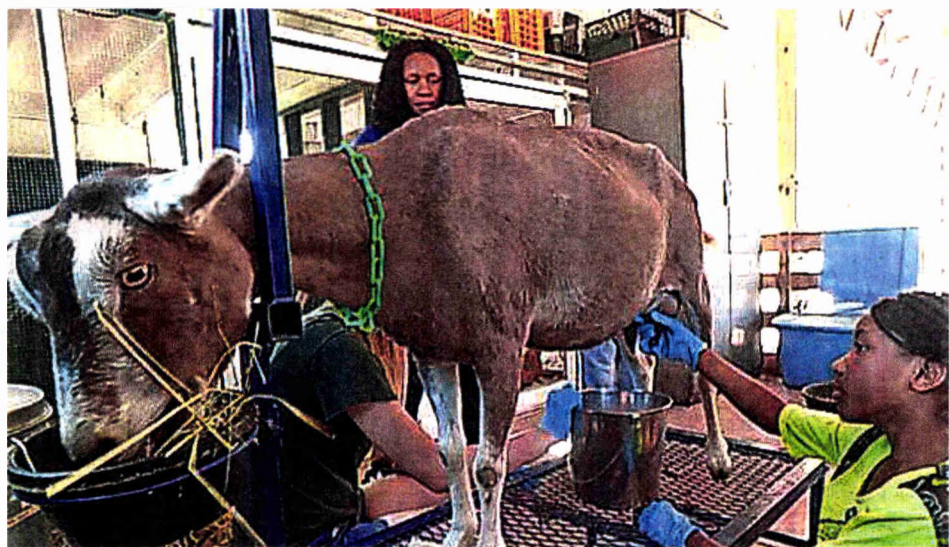
access to a host of educational opportunities, classes and projects.

Crystal Johnson, Journey's mom, began bringing her daughter to the farm about a month ago.

"I think the skills they learn are invaluable and I want her to have an appreciation for her food sources and how someone worked to make that happen," Johnson said. "Plus, getting them outside and away from technology is really good."

The club meets each Wednesday at MSU Extension Tollgate Farm, which owns the animals, but leases them to kids for showing at fair. All the kids participate in tending the club's vegetable garden and selling the products of their labor to support the club at a stand at the farm beginning this month, but livestock interaction is not required, as Hutka notes animals are not for everyone.

And while there is an agricultural element here, kids ages 5-19 with all different interests are welcome to join the club and nurture their hobbies, all year long.



Journey Phillips, 9, of West Bloomfield milks a goat at the MSU Extension Tollgate Farm in Novi as her mom, Crystal Johnson, watches.

SUSAN BROMLEY

Hutka's children, Alana and Aaron, both students at Walled Lake Western High School, have numerous exhibits they will take to the Oakland County Fair this week, which besides animals will include art, food and plants.

Besides thousands of exhibits by both children and adults, the \$10 per carload or \$5 per motorcycle or walk-in admis-

sion will allow you to see a Marvelous Mutts show, lumberjack show, racing pigs, Miracle of Birth barn and much more. For additional fees, enjoy carnival rides and grandstand events, including rodeo, monster trucks and off-road derby. For a full schedule of the fair, which runs through July 17 at the Springfield Oaks County Park, 12451 Andersonville Road in Da-

visburg, go to oakfair.org. For more information on Sun, Water & Seeds 4H Club and MSU Extension Tollgate Farm, go to <http://sunwaterseeds4h.moonfruit.com/>, find it on Facebook, or email sunwaterseeds@gmail.com.

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CLINTON

Continued from Page A1

alism and integrity to Plymouth Township government while putting people before politics, getting control of our finances, and treating taxpayers and business owners with respect.

Q: What would be your strategy for addressing the township's retiree pension and health-care benefits over the long term?

A: According to Eric Scorsone, director of the Michigan State University Extension Center for Local Government, Finance and Policy, legacy costs are the single biggest financial problem facing Michigan municipalities. Many of our neighboring communities, to include Canton,

Northville Township and Plymouth, are aggressively addressing their legacy costs. We are behind in this regard. Plymouth Township currently has \$22 million in unfunded pension and retiree health-care costs. These liabilities represent promises that were made to township employees, fire fighters and police officers which have not been provided for. These promises should not continue to go unfunded and should not be renegotiated. Expenses need to be reduced, unnecessary spending eliminated, and money put aside to ensure that our promises of future pensions and retiree healthcare obligations are fulfilled.

Q: Much has been said about the current board's relationship with some elements of

the community, and about poor relationships between some board members. How would you, as treasurer, work toward being able to disagree more agreeably, and toward gaining the respect of all voters, even those who speak up to oppose board actions?

A: In 30-plus years as a business executive dealing with employees, customers and prospects every day, I have learned that the key to maintaining strong business and personal relationships is to follow three simple rules. First — always do the right thing. Second — treat people the way you want to be treated. Third — be completely transparent. People may not always agree with you, but they will trust and respect you. Following these three simple relationship rules has served

me well in the business world. I am confident this philosophy will continue to serve me well if elected treasurer.

Q: Name your top two priorities for Plymouth Township and briefly describe how, as treasurer and a board member, you would go about addressing those priorities.

A: Public safety is the No.1 priority. When township residents dial 9-1-1, they expect help will arrive quickly, with trained resources and with the proper equipment. It is a well-documented fact that in the case of a heart attack or stroke, minutes matter. Today, Plymouth Township has a broken hybrid model for fire and emergency services. We have a dedicated fire/emergency department with a depleted staff of 18. Fire

Station 2 is closed. Over the past two years, six of these resources (firefighters) have been funded through a federal grant which expired in March. We rely on Huron Valley Ambulance for emergency backup and patient transport. At the top of my agenda is to reopen Station 2, expand the fire/emergency staff to satisfactory levels and upgrade equipment.

Q: What is your view of the Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex becoming a public, taxpayer-supported entity for Plymouth and Plymouth Township residents? What is your view of recent improvements to township recreation facilities, especially Plymouth Township Park?

A: An estimated \$25 million is required to upgrade the PARC build-

ing. I do not know whether I will ultimately support public funding, but I do know there is enough interest that we should have a discussion about it. Collaborative dialogue with residents, local businesses, Plymouth officials and PARC organizers will determine whether this project is right. Only after receiving overwhelming public support would I suggest putting the question of public funding in front of the voters. Residents have the right to have their voices heard — unlike with the enhancements to Plymouth Township Park. In this instance, \$1.9 million was borrowed and spent on golf course and park upgrades with no public input while significant cuts were being made within the fire department. Public safety need to be a priority.



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Officials, neighbors help clean up storm's mess

Matt Jachman Staff Writer

Dozens of trees were knocked down in central Plymouth Township by a storm that passed quickly through the area Friday evening. The storm, which also sent artists and visitors at downtown Plymouth's Art in the Park scrambling for cover, caused several thousand customers in the area to lose electrical power. Power had been restored by earlier this week. Township Supervisor Shannon Price said he went out to help Friday after hearing that a felled tree was blocking Ann Arbor Trail and ended up grabbing a chainsaw and cutting up downed branches and trees throughout the area. He was joined by Treasurer Ron Edwards, township public works employees and residents.

"You had neighbors helping neighbors," Price said Wednesday. "We all worked really hard together." Price said he and other volunteers were mostly removing trees and branches from public right-of-ways and streets, where they were blocking passage. At one point, Dave LewAllen, a television anchorman for WXYZ-TV (Channel 7), joined the volunteers. LewAllen had been visiting a friend's house and saw what was going on, Price said. "It was a community effort," Price said. "We had our DPW guys out working. Wayne County helped out where they could. We had residents jumping in helping." Price said Wayne County agreed to have workers chip

downed trees and branches along major roads, but that the township contacted its waste hauler, Rizzo Environmental Services, to go into the neighborhoods and chip up wood set out at the curb. Price said some property damage was reported, such as when a tree fell into a house and another tree fell onto a porch at another house, but no injuries were reported. He said the damage, for the most part, was in the area between Sheldon Road and Beck Road. The township's Hilltop Golf Course, among the hardest hit areas, lost dozens of trees; Price said a contractor will have to be hired to clean up the course.



The roots of this tree in Plymouth Township tore up the surrounding sod like a carpet when it came down during Friday's storm.

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CANTON CRIME WATCH

Angry husband accused in gun incident

An estranged husband, allegedly upset after his wife showed up with another man to pick up her children, has been charged amid accusations he brandished a handgun and pointed it at the other man. Turns out the other man, 19, was the 28-year-old woman's cousin rather than a romantic interest, a police report said. No shots were fired and no one was injured as the incident unfolded about 9:40 p.m. July 5 at the Canton Garden Apartments, southeast of Joy Road and I-275, on Canton's north side. Lawrence Evans, 30, faces a probable cause hearing Friday on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon and felony firearm, according to



Evans

35th District Court. He was released on a personal bond. The teen said the suspect approached him in the parking lot and threatened to "smack him up," according to the report. The teen told police he got a crowbar out of the trunk of his car to defend himself. The suspect then went inside the apartment and returned with what was described as a silver handgun and pointed it at the teen, who ran around the car to try to shield himself, the report said. Then, the suspect's brother emerged from the apartment and intervened to defuse the incident, the report said. After police arrived, the woman said she was separated from her husband and said he became angry when she arrived with her cousin. Police confiscated the handgun and five rounds of ammunition and took the suspect into custody.

— By Darrell Clem

PLYMOUTH CRIME WATCH

Man says he lost \$3,000 in phone scam

A Plymouth Township man fell victim to a phone scam — to the tune of \$3,000 — when he got a call last month threatening him with arrest over "bad taxes." The man told police he had received a call June 21 from two men who said they were with the Internal Revenue Service, according to a Plymouth Township Police Department report. He was told the IRS would send an agent to arrest him for "bad taxes" and tax evasion if he did not comply with their instructions. He was told to go to a local supermarket and buy \$3,000 worth of iTunes gift cards, while staying on the phone with the men, and then read, over the phone, the numbers on the backs of the cards, the report said. He panicked, he said, and did as the men told him.

Credit-card fraud

A township man feared his identity had been stolen after an attempted credit card fraud in London, England. The man told police June 24 that his bank had called to tell him someone had tried to make a \$3,000 charge, on a credit card belonging to him, at an Apple store in London. The transaction was denied, the report said, even though the card-user was able to provide the owner's Social Security number.

'Epic' fireworks

Police dispersed a crowd of about 20 men who were engaged in what was called an "epic Roman candle war" at Plymouth Township Park early July 5. Responding to a noise complaint just before 1:30 a.m., a police report said, an officer informed the men of the township's fireworks ordinance. The ordinance allows the use of legal consumer fireworks on 10 annual holidays, including

the Fourth of July, and on the day before and the day after each of those holidays.

Use of consumer fireworks, however, is prohibited between midnight (1 a.m. New Year's Day) and 8 a.m.

The police report did not describe the way the fireworks were being used in a Roman candle war. It did say the men cleaned up the debris before leaving the park.

Purse theft

A woman reported the theft of her purse from her vehicle while she fueled it up at the Kroger gas station on Ann Arbor Road at Sheldon the afternoon of June 24. The woman did not see anyone take the purse, which she left in the car as she pumped gas, a police report said. There was \$100 cash and her driver's license inside, the woman said. Police said a security video proved unhelpful because the victim had parked her vehicle out of the camera's range.

— By Matt Jachman

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CONGRATULATIONS! WE'RE PROUD OF YOU!

These area students were among the more than 1,300 named to the Dean's List for the Winter 2016 Semester, with a grade point average of 3.25 or higher.

Table listing student names by location: Berkley, Bloomfield Hills, Canton, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Garden City, Clawson, Huntington Woods, Livonia, Milford, New Hudson, Northville, Plymouth, Royal Oak, South Lyon, Westland, West Bloomfield, Wayne, Southfield.



NORM POWELL

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Munising is part of Norm Powell's photography exhibit "American Landscapes" at the Novi Civic Center through the end of July.

PHOTOGRAPHER TAKES TO THE ROAD TO FOLLOW HIS PASSION

Susan Bromley
Staff Writer

Behind each of the 67 photographs is a story and Norm Powell.

Here is an old ice machine that stands by the road in the middle of seemingly nowhere in Marblehead, Ohio, and for which he made an unplanned stay in a motel in order to capture it in the correct light. Over there are two CSX train box cars Powell found in Munising and which to him encapsulate the Upper Peninsula.

A striking view of the Grand Canyon invokes a memory as where he lost the foot of his tripod, which was later recovered.

"Pictures are supposed to tell stories, but they're not always obvious to people," said Powell, a Novi resident whose photography exhibit, "American Landscapes," is on display at the Novi Civic Center through the end of this month. "There is always a story to me."

A close-up angle on a windmill at Greenfield Village signifies the beginning of Powell's foray into serious photography.

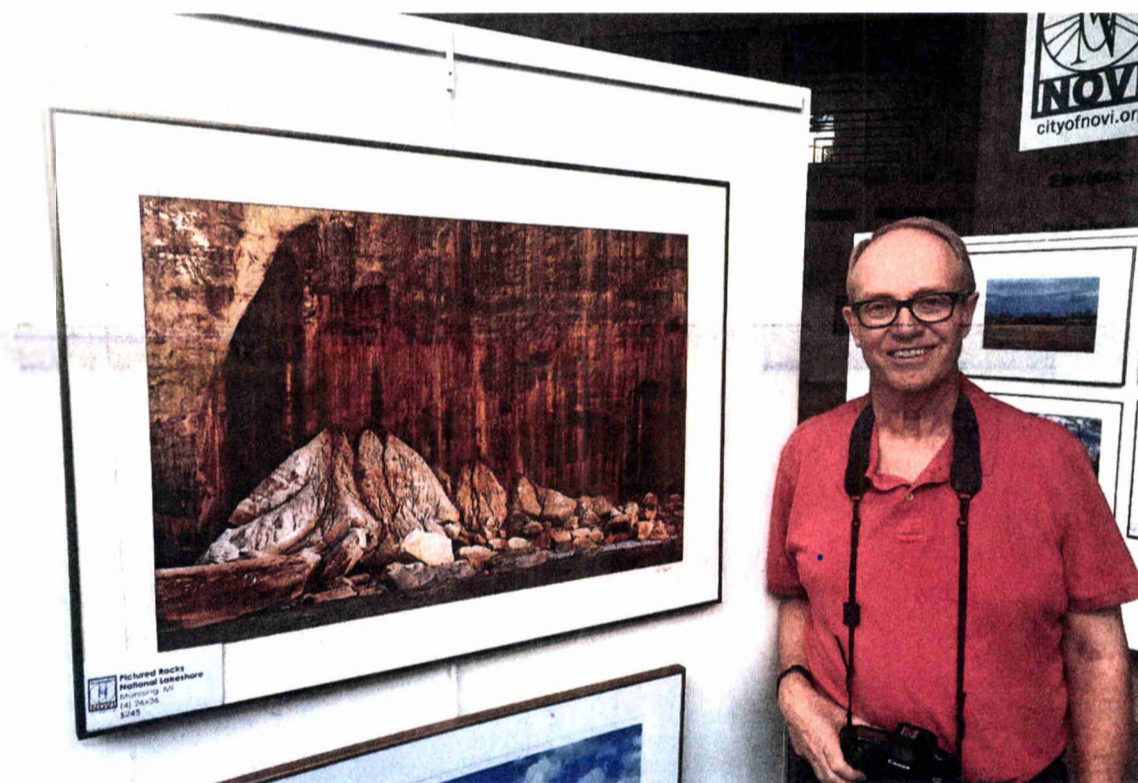
Retirement venture

While he has fond memories of taking pictures with his father, an amateur photographer who had a dark room, and spent a lot of time behind the camera taking photos of his children, Nicky and Kevin, while they were growing up, it wasn't until Powell retired in 2008 as an information technology manager after 30 years of service with Chrysler that he turned his eye to spending many more hours pursuing his hobby.

"People who are successful at retirement have a plan and know what they are going to do," Powell said. "My plan was to do photography, but that really meant learning how things worked. ... It's all about light and seeing, as well as the equipment. What is your style? Your specialty? It isn't like I've figured it out, but I've narrowed it down."

He doesn't do portraiture and doesn't often include people in his photos, although if he thinks a scene calls for it, he will sit and wait for what he calls "the stage and the actors," whether that is tourists at the Grand Tetons or pedestrians walking by an Ann Arbor mural featuring Woody Allen.

What Powell is more commonly drawn to, as evidenced in the Novi Civic Center exhibit, is nature, architecture and the rare vehicle, such as what he thought was a 1948 Chevy, but which he learned was actually a 1949 made a visitor to the exhibit made the correction on the accompanying label.



SUSAN BROMLEY

Norm Powell with "Pictured Rocks" one of the many photographs currently in his "American Landscapes" exhibit this month at the Novi Civic Center.

Road tripping

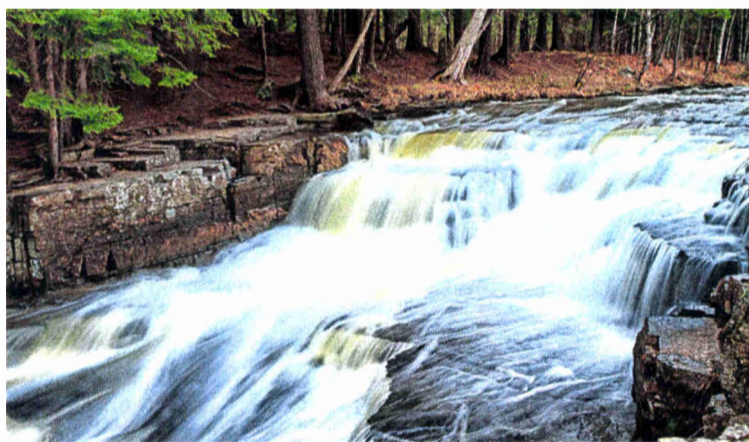
Powell isn't a huge car aficionado, except as a means of getting to the next place he wants to photograph. He and wife Nancy, who retired last year from GM and whom he fondly calls his "wheel man," take a lot of road trips.

"I've learned it's better for him not to look off to the left while driving," Nancy said with a laugh. She drives and happily goes along on the jaunts without complaint, always bringing something to read. "Wherever we go, I have a book and I know it will be beautiful. The only thing I don't like is if I can't see him and there are water or cliffs."

Powell sometimes goes alone or Nancy flies to a rendezvous point, but he has seldom run into trouble, save for the time in 2010 when he was on the Lincoln Highway on a trip out west by himself and decided to detour up a dirt road in western Nebraska, where a guidebook instructed that covered wagons from the frontier days had dug grooves in the side of hills and there was a plaque describing the history.

Unfortunately for Powell, it had been raining and his vehicle became hopelessly stuck in the mud. With the help of good service from both Verizon and AAA, Powell was able to get out of the predicament, with the car clinging, clanging and throwing mud through the air for about five miles.

Other than that, he adds, the last seven years have been lucky, with no flat tires or breakdowns and perhaps, at



NORM POWELL

Quartzite Falls, Arvon Township, in the Upper Peninsula, part of Norm Powell's photography exhibit "American Landscapes."

worst, a hotel that didn't meet expectations. Sometimes he bypasses even that by staying in the back of his Jeep, although the 61-year-old notes he might be getting kind of old for that.

Slow down, take it in

Along his routes, there are lots of stops and pauses.

At the Grand Canyon, where he shot a street light bizarrely out of place in the majestic natural landscape, he also wandered the rim of the canyon and sat for long periods of time, watching people work their way in or out or watching the sun come up.

"It is best when you can just sit there, waiting to see. You don't know what will happen, but something will happen and it will be cool," Powell said. "We were there two or three days and I did it every morning."

What he has also found is

away. It was a great lesson."

He seemingly doesn't miss much, carefully planning his photo shoots based on weather and time of day. On a trip to Pictured Rocks in the U.P., he had a choice of two days for a cruise and picked the perfect day for weather, as well as the right time of afternoon. The resulting photo in the exhibit confirms the right choice was made for sun, camera settings and what was in the frame, even as he had to click fast. He notes that to capture the right image, there may be five minutes or five seconds.

The self-described "wanderer" also takes a camera with him wherever he goes. On casual forays, he carries a Fujifilm in his pocket. For specific locales, he uses a Canon 5D MIII.

Road less traveled

"I am always looking when I am out — for geometric patterns or relationships of things to others," Powell said. "With natural landscapes, it's the sheer beauty. It's there and you're lucky enough to see it in a way meaningful to you."

Locally, he enjoys going to Nichols Arboretum and has been there once a month for more than a year, as well as Maybury State Park, where he lately is trying to get pictures with fog.

Among Powell's favorite places to photograph nationally have been Mt. Rushmore, which he calls "large defacement of a mountain, but a very special, very American place," and Devil's Tower. While these are tourist attractions, he generally is not drawn to crowded places and has yet to go to Yosemite National Park, although he likely will one day and find the photos no one else is shooting.

He likes to take the road less traveled, like the one that led to one of his most challenging photos, the Quartzite Falls, an 8- to 10-mile two-track road in the U.P., where there was no cellphone service if something were to happen. Fortunately for him, what happened was a stunning photograph, also in the exhibit.

Powell's photos in the "American Landscapes" exhibit are available for sale, but profit in photography is not his primary goal.

"Trying to get better is the biggest goal," he said. "The best pic is like prosperity, it's just around the corner. Mostly, I just want to give people an idea of what they can go see, maybe give them an idea of something they've overlooked and will look for a little harder next time."

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Back from the brink, Olga's ready to expand

JC Reindl
Michigan.com

Under new ownership and seven months out of bankruptcy, Olga's Kitchen is bringing back classic recipes and preparing to expand after a period of retrenchment at the beloved Michigan restaurant chain.

"Olga's Kitchen deserves to be a bigger chain," said Mark Schostak, executive chairman of Livonia-based Team Schostak Family Restaurants, which bought Olga's from bankruptcy in December. "This is a great brand with a lot of great people and it just deserves better and more."

The Schostak company is looking to open 10-12 new Olga's Kitchens in addition to the 25 current locations. Prior to last year's Chapter 11 filing and the subsequent culling of underperforming restaurants, there were 35 Olga's restaurants. Schostak said all but one new location will be in Michigan; the other would open in Toledo, a market that has been without an Olga's since a mall spot closed. Other recent closures included the former Sterling Heights, Twelve Oaks mall and downtown Detroit locations.

On the food front,

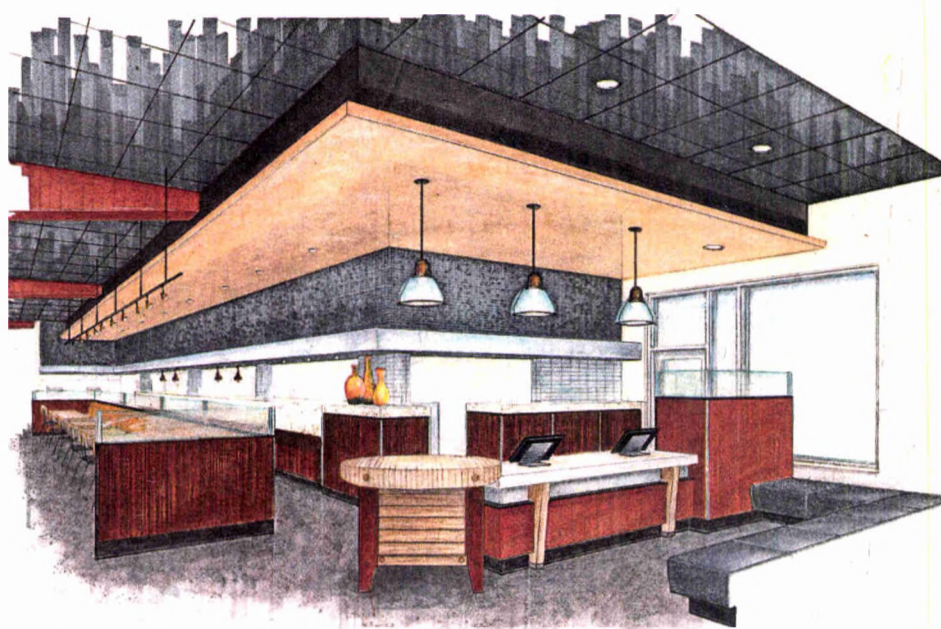
Olga's employees are receiving new training to better standardize the quality of the iconic Olga's bread at every restaurant.

And several once-popular Olga's dishes, including the spinach and cheese pies and orange cream coolers, are now being made from the original recipes of restaurant namesake Olga Loizon, who opened the first Olga's in 1970 and is now 90 years old. She is still with the restaurant chain, although no longer in the kitchen on a regular basis.

Customers are said to prefer the taste of the classic recipes over the concoctions of more recent years, which in some cases were created to save money on ingredients. But that strategy backfired for the restaurant chain's previous owner, according to Kenneth Dalto, who was Olga's Kitchen's court-appointed receiver during bankruptcy and owns a Bingham Farms-based management and consulting firm.

"It was trying to cut costs," Dalto said of the previous strategy, which also involved smaller portion sizes.

"If you could buy in bulk a feta cheese which was cheaper and was not the same tasting or not as



A rendering of the future interior for Olga's Kitchen restaurants.

TEAM SCHOSTAK

good, you'd say, 'Well, people are never going to realize' and you mix it with other things," he said. "But they did realize."

Other big changes are slated for Olga's Kitchen's restaurant design and brand logo.

The firm is working with a designer to create a new image that will roll out to most Olga's locations in the next two to three years, Schostak said. A new Olga's Kitchen

logo is also being designed and could be unveiled with the renovations. The logo will consolidate and replace the six or seven different Olga's logos that have been in use at various restaurant locations.

The overarching goal of all the changes is to reconnect with Olga's Kitchen customers and return the chain to the prominence it once had, especially in southeast Michigan.

"It's almost a part of our cultural right of passage to go to Olga's Kitchen," Schostak said.

But Olga's arguably faces greater challenges in today's food industry than during its heyday in the 1980s through early 2000s. So-called fast casual chains where people order while standing up have expanded and grown popular with younger demographics. Examples include Panera Bread and Chipotle.

Most Olga's restaurants have traditional sit-down service. Schostak said they will remain so for at least the near future because that is a proven business model.

Dalto said it makes sense for Olga's to stick with sit-down service, because its restaurants must appeal to a wide variety of customers and ages. "To move to all fast casual, a lot of older people wouldn't like that — they'd rather sit down," Dalto said.

Olga's had been owned for decades by California businessman Robert Solomon. In 2004, he and the Schostak firm struck an agreement to go 50/50 on 15 proposed new Olga's locations, although only 11 were built. Their relationship soured as money was siphoned out of the partnership to prop up the money-losing Olga's locations that Solomon owned.

Olga's Kitchen filed for bankruptcy in June 2015 after years of losses. The chain's many mall locations were particularly hard hit by the decline in mall shopping that accelerated in the last recession.

In addition to its new Olga's, Team Schostak Family Restaurants also owns various Applebee's, MOD Pizza and Del Taco restaurants.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Keller Williams

The new Keller Williams office at 789 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth, will have a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 3 p.m., as part of its open house that runs 2-7 p.m. Friday, July 15. The business moved from its location on Ann Arbor

Road at I-275.

Boji Home Builders

Boji Home Builders will have a ribbon-cutting at 11:30 a.m. Aug. 5 to celebrate the start of its new subdivision, Crystal Village at Denton. A furnished model home will be open at 49287 Hawksbury Road.

The ribbon-cutting is part of an open house from noon to 6 p.m.

College financial prep

Going to college is the start of an exciting new adventure for many young adults. To help students become financially prepared, Catholic

Vantage Financial will host a College Financial Prep Workshop 101 6:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 3. The workshop will be held at the credit union's Plymouth branch, located at 8817 Sheldon Road, at the northwest corner of Sheldon and Joy roads.

"Getting the right start with finances helps pave the way for a student's success," said Emma Teller, CVP vice president of marketing and business development. "If you go on a trip, you usually want to have a good map or GPS system. Starting college is much the same. It helps to have a good financial

plan."

Workshop topics will include tools for budgeting and managing living expenses in the dorm or an apartment, along with tips for managing checking accounts and credit cards; how to establish

good credit; protect yourself from identity theft, and more.

Among the attendees to the College Financial Workshop will be Megan Hammond, a blogger and intern for Catholic Vantage Financial, who will be a

college freshman in the fall.

Hammond said, "Over the last several months, I have learned invaluable financial skills that I know will serve me well as I head off to college. Financial education is something that is largely misunderstood, especially by millennials, so I hope that my blog can be an informative avenue to educate people my own age."

This free workshop is open to the public with free pizza and pop provided. To sign up, email memberservice@mycvf.org or call 734-432-0212.



Hammond



Mark Poll, husband of Caitlin Helgesen of Mitsubishi Electric, Mason Rakoski, son of Mark Rakoski of Mitsubishi Electric, and Joe Teed of Mitsubishi Electric, present a donation of \$11,747 via check to Deb Madonna from The Miracle League of Plymouth.

Mitsubishi Electric supports Miracle League

Mitsubishi Electric Automotive America's Detroit office announced that it raised \$11,747 at its golf tournament fundraiser, the fourth annual PEACE Committee Classic, which took place May 25. All proceeds from the outing were donated to The Miracle League of Plymouth, a not-for-profit organization that provides children with mental and physical disabilities the opportunity to play baseball.

The event, organized by Mitsubishi Electric Detroit's philanthropy

group, The PEACE (Proving Excellence And Caring Exist) Committee, was held at Cattails Golf Club in South Lyon. More than 40 companies supported this year's outing, including: 107 golfers, 18 hole sponsors and 28 prize donors.

"Each year, participation has grown in the number of golfers and sponsors who have supported our cause. Through everyone's generosity, we were able to raise nearly \$5,000 more compared to last year's event," said Mark Rakoski, executive di-

rector, Mitsubishi Electric. "We are very grateful for the amount of continued support we receive for this outing. It is a great cause and we're happy to do it."

The Miracle League of Plymouth, established in 2012, holds two seven-week seasons each year. Once a month, Mitsubishi Electric volunteers partner with a child at a Miracle League game. This year, Mitsubishi was able to volunteer at four games during the months of May and June.

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GUEST COLUMN

Let's have a civil discussion about PARC

PARC has become a major issue in the upcoming Plymouth Township election. While this once in a lifetime opportunity to convert a historic site in downtown Plymouth into a community arts and recreation center has significant support, it has been met with resistance by the Plymouth Township administration.

In a 5-2 vote, the board refused to be part of a feasibility team with the city, the school district and PARC management to assess the scope and feasibility of the project. Members refused to even



Don Soenen
GUEST COLUMNIST

talk about it.

If this project is to be successful, it is imperative that the project include the needs, wants and support of township residents. Current usage of the existing facility, even with its limitations, is indicative of the tremendous need for this facility. This is not a PARC, Inc. project. It's a community project that requires the collabora-

tion of private donors, the city of Plymouth, the school district and Plymouth Township.

PARC is a nonprofit organization, attempting to bring the parties together for the common good. It's a facilitator, composed of volunteers attempting to take advantage of this unique opportunity to improve the quality of life in our community.

It's disheartening to hear township officials completely misrepresent the scope and cost of the project. They refused to talk about it, but now they are experts on the

project! Their ridiculous cost estimate is a total fabrication, intended to scare voters. It has no basis in fact. They claim we don't have a business plan. As they well know, the business plan must be done in collaboration with all the parties.

The PARC facility is not an island. It needs to be considered as part of a comprehensive arts and recreation plan for the entire Plymouth community. Should the current soccer, baseball, tennis and football facilities be at PARC or would some of them be better placed in the township? Maybe

that space at PARC could be put to better recreational use. All parties need to sit down, assess the needs and wants of the community and jointly develop a business plan that we can take to private and public funders and, eventually, to the voters, if necessary.

There is private, grant and foundation money available for this project that could cover a substantial portion of the cost. The problem is potential funders won't touch it until the township stops trashing PARC, rescinds its decision to boycott any dis-

cussions of the project and joins with the other parties to at least talk about it.

I'm calling on the township once again to join the feasibility team to assess community support and determine the scope and feasibility of the project. Only then can we determine the benefits, cost and potential funding sources. Let's do the right thing and talk about it.

Don Soenen is president of the Plymouth Arts & Recreation Complex.

LETTERS

Obrec as Canton clerk

I read with interest your cover story "Obrec, Lutkenhoff face off in primary." Since Terry Bennett, Canton's long-serving clerk, will not be seeking re-election, her shoes will be difficult to fill. She has served Canton with distinction; Terry has a reputation as one of the state of Michigan's finest clerks.

Speaking as the former Canton supervisor and current trustee who knows all three candidates, Linda Obrec is best qualified to be Canton's next clerk. Linda has demonstrated the expertise and maturity to manage effectively the important functions of the clerk's office.

Linda is a long-time Canton resident who possesses an MBA with a successful business career; local executive for Huntington Bank, Sprint, the Detroit Regional Chamber and her own business, Front Line Resources, Inc.

I had the privilege of appointing Linda to the newly established Canton Commission for Culture, Arts and Heritage, where she served with distinction as chairperson. While a member of this important commission, Linda demonstrated her commitment to Canton's growing art's community. She worked tirelessly to coordinate and expand the arts in our diverse community. Linda also served as immediate past president of Canton's Newcomers and Neighbors, the largest women's social organization in the greater Canton area. Linda is founding member of the Canton Community Foundation Giving Hope, Women's Giving Circle.

Linda was recently honored by Canton Township with the Community Supporter Award for her continuous and effective involvement in Canton. She also has been supportive of the Canton Lions Club, Canton Goodfellows and Plymouth-Canton Community Schools. I know that Linda is committed to keeping neighborhoods safe, excellence in public service, keeping taxes low, being fiscally conservative and providing quality leisure services.

It is essential that Canton voters elect a clerk who is up to the important task of managing the Canton clerk's office. Linda is the right choice for Canton clerk. She is a proven leader to keep building Canton's future.

Tom Yack
Canton Township trustee

Vote for Noble

The majority of Americans are aware that our country has become be-

sieged with polarizing issues. Familiar ones include immigration not being based on our need; terrorism; government overspending; and government overreach, to name a few. Political correctness has also paralyzed our nation.

But I believe the biggest issue we have are politicians more concerned about their futures and who are not responsive to the needs and wants of their constituents. They often say what we want to hear, but act differently at voting time to protect or enhance their political advantages by giving in to special interest groups. Many of our elected officials in Lansing and other state capitols do not even protect our states rights as afforded through the United States Constitution.

What this country needs are statesmen. Statesmen care about our country and our rights – not just their political skins. They serve us, not the other way around. It is important that we elect these servants at every level of government, but especially at the local level. And that is why I have decided to vote for Jeff Noble to be our next Michigan House representative from the cities of Plymouth and Northville, their townships and part of Canton.

Jeff Noble will work hard to preserve our state's rights. Jeff Noble says what he means and means what he says. Jeff wants to serve us. He is a conservative running on the Republican ticket. I ask all of the voters in District 20 to research Jeff Noble (www.vote-jeffnoble.com) and vote for him at the Aug. 2 primary.

Dale Bernhardt
Plymouth Township

Know the candidates

I would like to remind Plymouth Township voters to do their homework before voting in the primary Aug. 2. All the usual campaign shenanigans (and then some) are front and center in this campaign season. This election is being called the ugliest that Plymouth Township residents have ever seen.

The challengers, of course, are criticizing the incumbents, which is the most tried-and-true method challengers use to try to unseat an incumbent. A voter should always view this approach with extreme skepticism. The adage "Be careful what you wish for" comes to mind. Change for the sake of change isn't always a good thing. Again, doing your homework is always prudent.

Some incumbents are also being accused of

using government resources to promote themselves. In addition, some are also being aided by out-of-town money to help remove opponents from the ballot. Although this is not a new tactic in local elections, it is something that manipulates the election and only serves special interests.

Adding insult to injury, there are also a number of candidates running (and one candidate who was running for clerk, but dropped out after being called out in a local editorial) that are only in the race to "dilute the vote." This is also an age-old campaign tactic used to confuse voters. These candidates have no intention of winning whatsoever; they only run to help the candidate they favor to stand a better chance at winning a seat.

I would also add that this is not meant to be an endorsement or criticism of any of the candidates running for office this election. It is merely a heads-up to voters who may not be fully aware of the tactics being used by some unscrupulous individuals to facilitate being elected Aug. 2. A lot is at stake for residents in Plymouth Township, we all have to be diligent and informed when we vote. With all due respect, knowledge is power. Make your vote count by knowing your candidates before you step in the booth to vote. You'll be glad you do.

Alexander Roehl
Plymouth Township

Vote for write-in

On Aug. 2, voters in Plymouth Township will have an opportunity to potentially make history in the election of our township supervisor. The reason is simple. We have one candidate, Shannon Price, who is not an incumbent, but an "appointee" of the current administration. We have another candidate, Kurt Heise, who was removed from the ballot, due to a Michigan Appeals Court ruling resulting from a lawsuit aimed at eliminating the choices for the voters in the township.

You still have a choice. It can be exercised through the write-in process! This is how it is done!

All candidates for office in Plymouth Township are Republican, with one exception, so this primary election will likely decide who is going to represent us for the next four years. As such, if you want to weigh in on our local election, you must vote on the Republican side of the ballot and cannot vote for any Democrats anywhere else on the ballot or you will spoil your ballot.

To write in – you simply go to the appropriate office, such as township supervisor, and under the name Shannon Price, you would write in Kurt Heise and fill in the oval next to his name. If you do not fill in the oval, the tabulator will not detect your write-in vote. This is very important. Please

print!

This same procedure can be followed for Don Schnettler, who is running for trustee, if you so choose.

Spelling variations of names are acceptable as long as the precinct inspectors can tell from what you write "that it is your intent to write in Kurt Heise or Don Schnettler." Example: Kurt Heise could be written as Kirt Hize and would show clear intent to write in Kurt Heise.

Your ballot is coming – please exercise your right to choose. Don't just vote for whomever is on the ballot – expand your choice and exercise your right to write in a candidate because the choice is ours, the people of Plymouth Township, not the courts.

If you already voted your ballot and didn't realize this option was available to you, you may go to the clerk's office, tell them you spoiled

your ballot and request a new one. This is your right! Exercise it!

Sandy Groth
Plymouth Township

Throwing at the walls

According to articles in both the daily newspapers, another law passed by the right wing Republicans and signed by the governor, has been ruled unconstitutional by a federal court judge. This one concerned union dues collection.

You would think that after being handed his butt in court, time after time, that Attorney General Bill Schuette would tell his fellow party members to quit passing BS laws. But that would be like Cheech telling Chong to quit smoking weed. Schuette has his eyes on the governor's office in 2018 and is not about to antagonize any potential contributors to the cause.

This week Rick Snyder signed the new Re-

publican-written State Education Budget. Even after it was pointed out that it contained funds for private schools that our state Constitution quite explicitly forbids, he still signed it. Snyder later said he would check with Schuette about the legality of the matter. So, another mark in the loss column for the AG's office.

This is just another example of these people throwing crap at the wall hoping something sticks. I imagine they then go to their corporate, union-hating bosses, with hands outstretched, saying "We tried, give us more money and we will do better in the next term."

Hopefully, in November, the make-up of the Senate and House in Michigan (and Washington D.C.) is reversed from Big Business bootlickers to Democrats who care about our people.

James Huddleston
Canton

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Outdoor hikes can 'inspire fresh thinking'

Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Maia Turek is the statewide recreation programmer for the Parks and Recreation of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. She's not surprised to hear of Stanford University research touting the mental health benefits of time outdoors.

"Oh, absolutely," Turek said from her Traverse City work location. "We also find it helps improve focus and creativity. It really does help inspire fresh thinking."

That day, she and colleagues had an outdoor meeting and she saw "just the idea of being around nature. You're still getting the benefits of being connected to that natural environment. You can have the same benefit of walking outside in an urban setting which has trees."

That includes suburban communities with trees and parks, she agreed.

'We go the other way'

She's an Ortonville native who graduated from Brandon High School. She travels "to a lot of really awesome destinations. We've actually found ourselves traveling south to take advantage of what's become an amazing city. We go the other way," she said of heading south on I-75 with her husband and family to Detroit.

They like the city's Riverwalk, as well as Belle Isle, now managed by the state DNR, and the Outdoor Adventure Center. "What an amazing way to spend a Saturday in the city," Turek said of the Riverwalk.

"It's this idea of getting people out of their cars," she said, noting you can park some dis-



Maia and Matthew Turek enjoy a peaceful sunset on Lake Ann, near Traverse City.

tance away to get health and nature benefits when you do drive. "Just allow yourself that 15 minutes in the morning and that 15 minutes in the afternoon," she said.

She noted those who exercise outdoors often stick with a workout longer. "You may go that extra distance to see that vista. Plus, there's so much to see. I can see a chipmunk, I can feel the sun on my face," Turek said.

She urges a visit to michigan.gov/Rec101 to learn more. She likes the trails movement. "Right now, there's some really great things going on in trails, especially in urban areas," said Turek, who holds a bachelor's degree in marketing/communications from Chicago's DePaul University, as well as a communications master's from Eastern Michigan University.

'Walk in groups'

Safety issues arise in walking outdoors in cities. "One of the things I recommend is walk in groups," said Turek, who belongs to the Hike It Baby national organization, as her family has a young son. She noted Michigan has some 12 such branches of Hike It Baby.

"It's good to be social and share an experience with people, especially if you have kids," she said.

"You're building a community every time you go out for a walk."

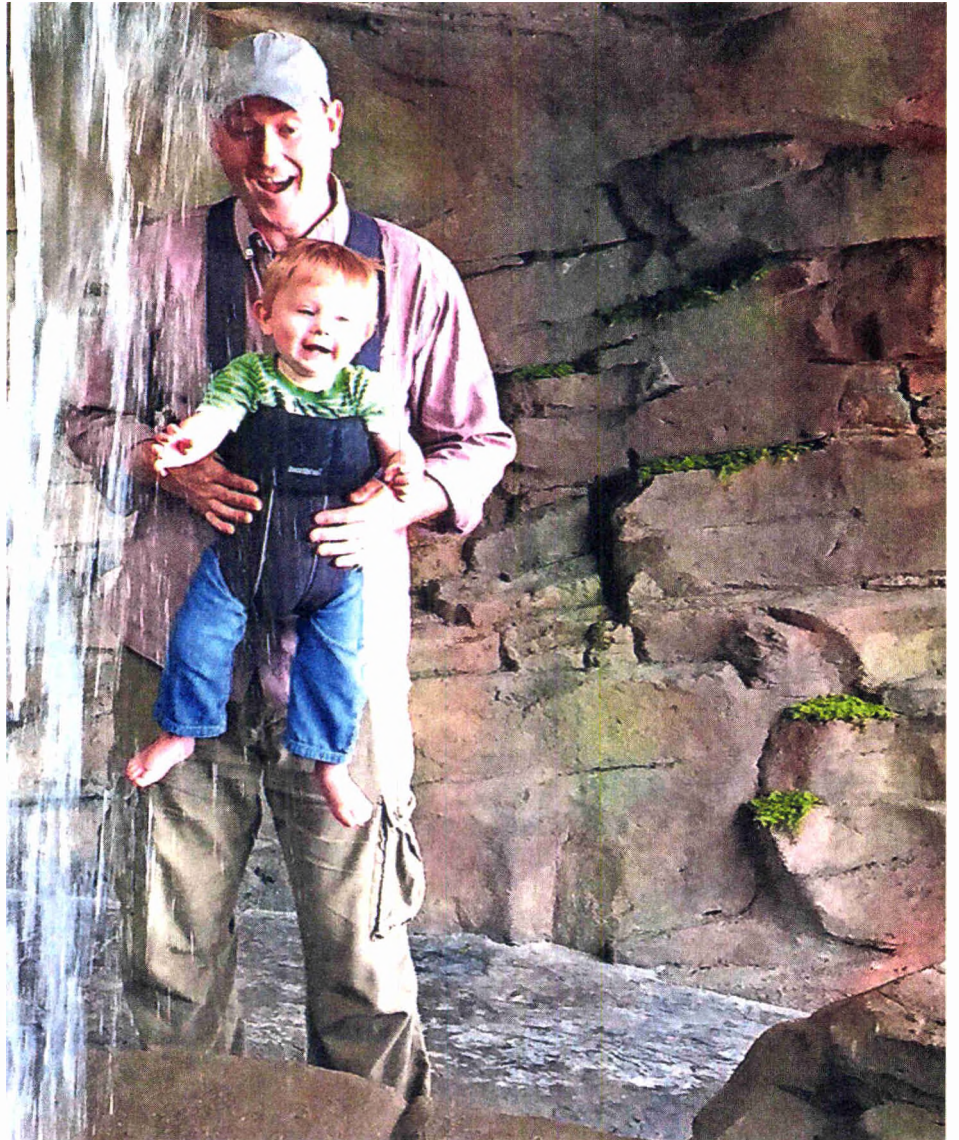
She added, "If you just take five to 30 minutes a day and look at a picture of nature, it has been shown to reduce anxiety. That sense of comfort, relaxation, that's what you feel when you're in it."

So what does her family like best about Detroit on their trips south? "Some of the really cool pop-up things we see where urban meets nature," Turek said. On Detroit's Dequindre Cut, they saw art reproductions from the Detroit Institute of Arts.

They saw oversized swings, a temporary installation, on a recent Detroit trek. "There's just so many new and interesting things that pop up," she said, also citing a storage container as a Detroit performance place.

Michigan State University's Tollgate Farm and Education Center in Novi also gives local folks a chance to explore outside. Education director Alan Jaros, who's been on the job there five years, answered questions for this newspaper:

Would you agree being in nature is helpful in reducing stress in people of all ages, including children? In what



Matthew Turek and son Bryan share some fun times in Detroit at the Outdoor Adventure Center. Mom works for the Department of Natural Resources and is an advocate of getting outside to play.

ways does that occur?

Studies have proven that spending time in a garden, hiking in the woods, or even enjoying time at your municipal park will substantially help your physical and mental well-being. We often promote the value of gardening for children and adults as a holistic way to improve quality of life.

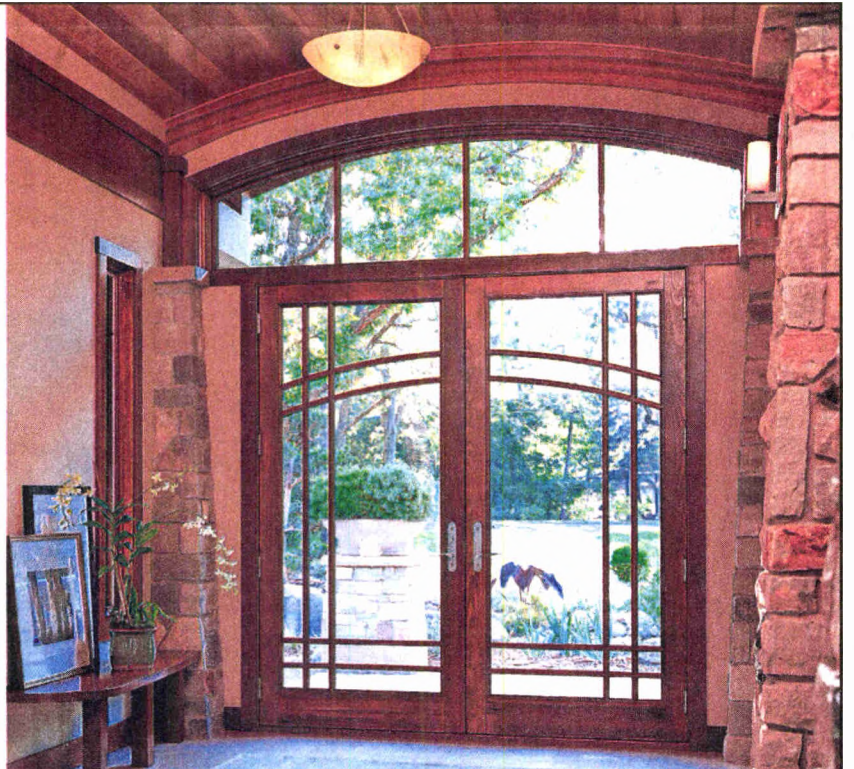
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but the young people are eating fresh, healthy snacks contributing to their physical well-being.

Jaros' academic role is within the MSU Extension Children and Youth Institute and Greening of Michigan Institute. His background is in adult education and he holds a B.S. in training and development from Oakland University and an M.S. in management from Walsh College.

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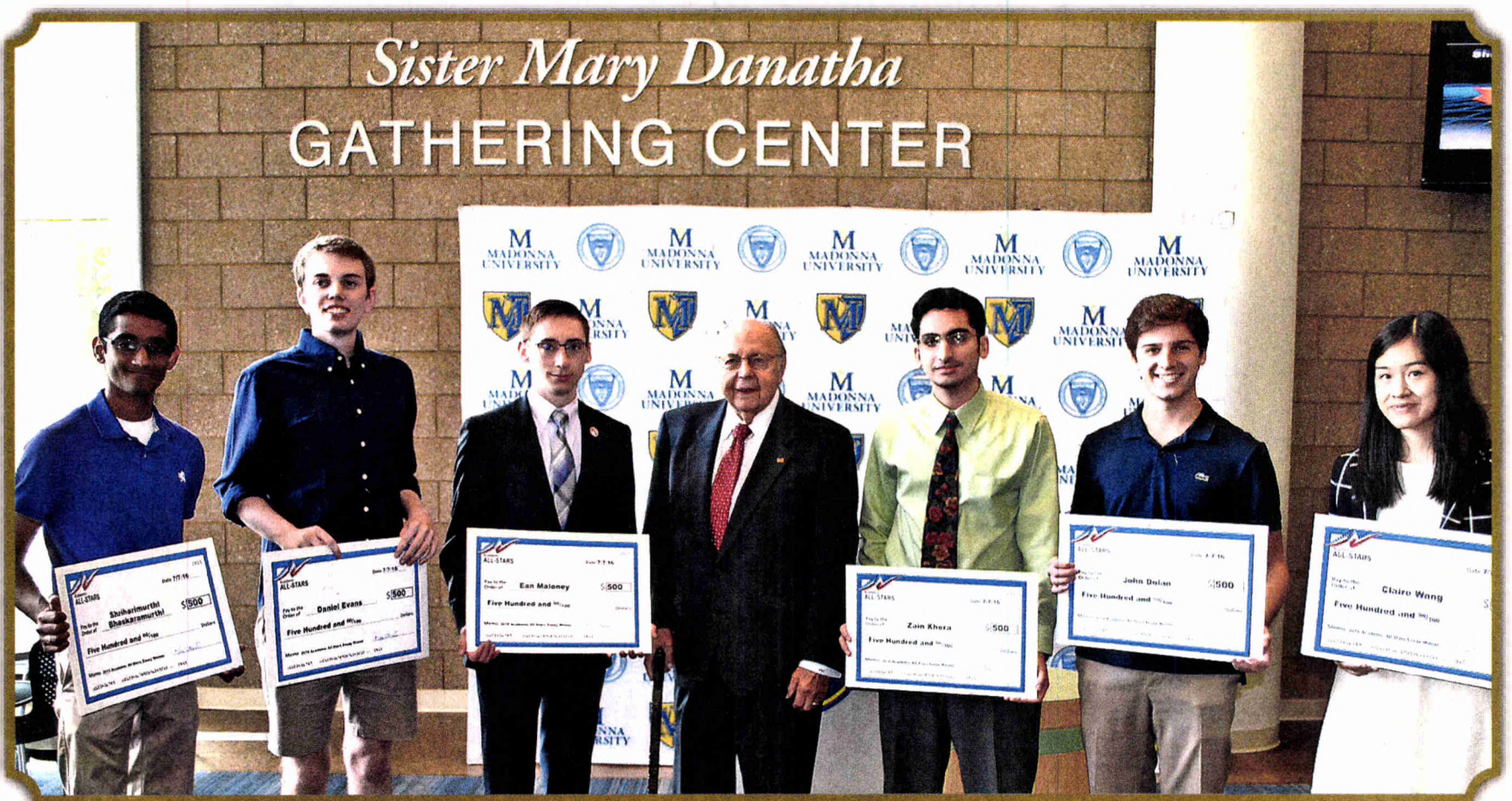
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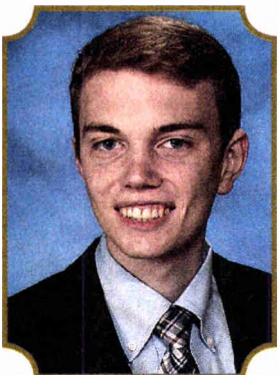
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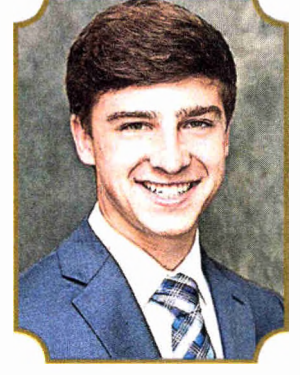
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Stanford University

DOWN AND DIRTY

Kids frolic at annual Wayne County Mud Day

Brad Kadrich
Staff Writer

It's the one day a year parents really don't worry about how much mud the kids tracked in.

Thousands of kids frolicked through the mud Tuesday at Wayne County Parks' 29th annual Mud Day at Nankin Mills.

"Mud Day brings me so much joy, because I love to see kids having fun, playing in the mud. The best part of Mud

Day is seeing who gets crowned king and queen of the mud!" parks director Beverly J. Watts said.

Thousands of children, divided into age groups, took part in games like mud limbo and wheelbarrow races.

The Western Wayne Hazmat Team was on-site to help rinse the kids off at the end of the event.

Sponsors for Mud Day included ITC Holdings, WJBK-TV (Channel 2), Community Alliance Credit Union, Metro Charter Academy, Friends of Wayne County Parks, Western Wayne Hazmat Team and Team Schostak Family Restaurants.



In a reversal of winter fun, these kids made "mud angels" Tuesday at Wayne County Mud Day.

KELLY DOBSON



KELLY DOBSON

Children's mud-covered bodies took on the appearance of stone statues.



KELLY DOBSON

The Westland Fire Department, to the delight of all parents, provided the invaluable service of hosing the kids off before they climbed into their parent's cars.

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KELLY DOBSON

Mom didn't mind a little mud herself while capturing the image at Wayne County Mud Day.



KELLY DOBSON

Mud loves company as thousands of kids took part in Mud Day.



KELLY DOBSON
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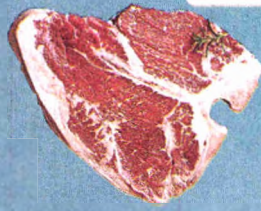
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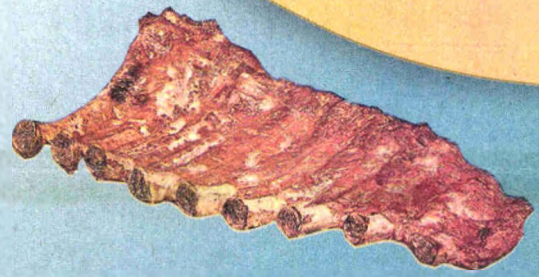
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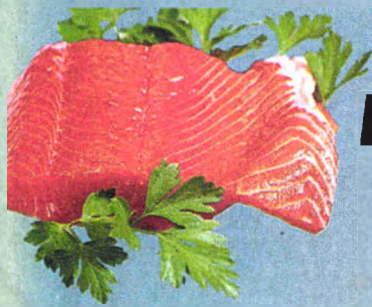


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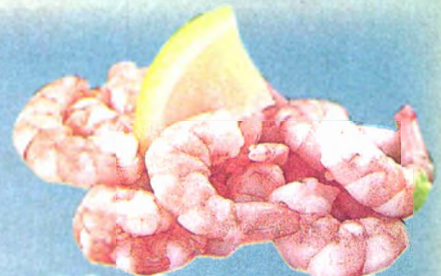
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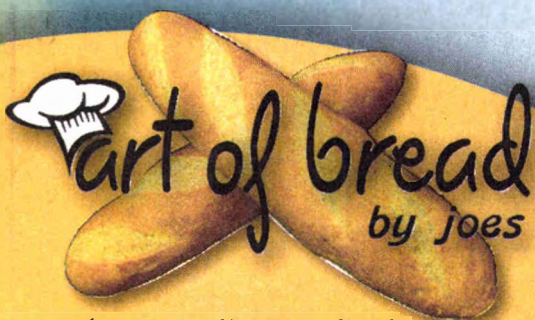
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INSPIRING SACRIFICE

Coach Snell grateful for health-restoring donation

Thurston assistant coach gives friend the gift of life

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

At some point during the aftermath of his heroic kidney donation surgery on June 20, Redford Thurston assistant football coach Pete Kotsogiannis requested a modest and lighthearted favor from the potential life-saving (and cer-

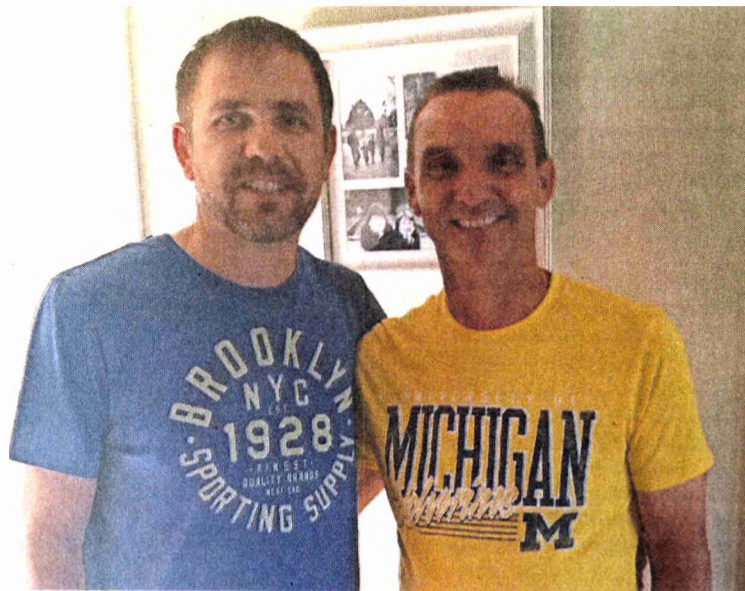
tainly life-enhancing) procedure's benefactor — Redford Thurston head football coach (and Kotsogiannis's brother-in-law) Bob Snell.

"Since I've only been a coordinator on the defensive side of the ball, I told Bob that all I wanted in return was to call the first offensive play for Thurston this season," Kotsogiannis revealed, smiling. "We work on all these trick plays, but never use them. If he lets me call the play, we're running a fancy

one."

The fact that Kotsogiannis and Snell were able to joke about the amazing and delicate four-person, paired donor kidney transplants that also involved two participants from California — a pair of acquaintances, like Snell and Kotsogiannis, one of whom was the recipient of Kotsogiannis's kidney, the other a donor for Snell — was a reflection of the proce-

See DONATION, Page B3



Longtime friends and fellow Redford Thurston football coaches Pete Kotsogiannis (left) and Bob Snell are doing well a few days after Kotsogiannis donated a kidney and Snell received one.

NEXT CHALLENGE: WORLD JUNIORS



With the Olympic rings towering behind him at Bahna Wrestling Center in Ann Arbor, Alec Pantaleo bursts with American pride.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

JUST TRY TO STOP HIM

Canton alum Pantaleo ready to take wrestling world by storm with Team USA

Tim Smith
Staff Writer

To be the best, Alec Pantaleo figures he'll have to beat the best.

He's already very close. That's apparent to anybody who knows what Pantaleo has been able to accomplish on the wrestling mat whether at Canton High School or the University of Michigan.

And he isn't stopping there. Pantaleo, who just turned 20, now plans to slam his way to international success and help Team USA win gold Aug. 30 through Sept. 4 at the United World Wrestling World Junior Championships in Macon, France.

"The best is yet to come," said Pantaleo, whose dad



Getting in some reps Tuesday are Team USA junior wrestlers Alec Pantaleo (left) and Sal Profaci, from New Jersey.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

(Mike) and uncles (Joe, Dan) set the family tone with success on the mat either at the collegiate or international levels. "For me, I can do anything I put my mind to. I see no reason why I can't win gold in France, why I can't keep pushing forward, keep improving.

"Hopefully soon my buddies I've been training with can come along with me on the ride. I'll just be surrounded by successful people. That's what I'm really excited about."

The Pantaleo legacy

This has been a whirlwind year for Pantaleo, finishing

See PANTALEO, Page B2

PREP SWIMMING

Venos is new Mercy girls swim coach

Has record of success as Brother Rice boys mentor

Dan O'Meara
Staff Writer

Mercy High School has found a most capable and qualified individual to take charge of its enormously successful swimming and diving program.

Mike Venos, who has had parallel results in his 17 years with the Brother Rice boys, will coach the Mercy girls, too.

He replaces Shannon Dunworth, who resigned recently after 12 seasons with the Marlins to take a non-coaching job in Texas.

"I can't begin to tell you how excited I am with this new opportunity," Venos said. "This is a program that is rich in tradition. These young ladies know how to work and understand how to compete, and they walk around with the pride of a Mercy girl."



Venos

The Venos family is very familiar with Mercy. Venos' mother, aunt, wife, sister-in-law and daughter are graduates of the school.

As was the case when Dunworth replaced Jim Downs in 2004, Venos had a lot of phone calls from past and present Mercy parents and swimmers, asking him to put his name into consideration for the position.

"The support I have received from people I know and a few I don't has been completely overwhelming," he said. "If I hadn't applied, I don't think the women in my family would have ever spoken to me again."

Venos' wife, Angela, is a former Mercy diver, and their daughter, Kelsey, is a former Mercy swimmer who was a member of the first four teams coached by Dunworth.

"I've known Shannon for a very long time, and I have witnessed what his approach can do for these young ladies," Venos said. "My daughter is a confident, successful young lady due in large part to what she gained from Mercy swimming. I look forward to continuing what Shannon has built upon with the Mercy legacy."

Coaching a girls team is nothing new for Venos, who did that at Pontiac Notre Dame Prep the past three years.

See VENOS, Page B2

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DUNLOP
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PANTALEO

Continued from Page B1

sixth in NCAA Division I at 149 pounds before blitzing all comers at the UWW Junior Nationals and Junior World Team Trials (in April and May, respectively).

He wrestled at 66 kilograms (145.5 pounds) for the latter two events.

After defeating Matthew Kolodzick in the Junior World Team Trials to punch his ticket to France, the younger Pantaleo was thrilled to continue his family's wrestling legacy.

"Uncle Joe was a two-time national runner-up," Pantaleo said. "But also coming off his sophomore year in college, just like me, he won junior nationals and then went out on the junior world team out to Russia and he won the Junior World Championships."

"We're big in my family on the idea every generation should be better off than the previous one, right?"

Bahna blast

Odds are in Alec Pantaleo's favor that he might do just that. He now is in the final stretch of preparation for the World Juniors, working from July 15-24 at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Col.

That followed weeks of grueling work against the likes of 2012 Olympian Jake Herbert and two-time national champion Kellen Russell at Bahna Wrestling Center in Ann Arbor.

"Jake is a two-time national champ, Kellen's a two-time national champ," Pantaleo said. "If I can do what they did and figure out how they did it, I'm going to get exactly what I want out of this sport."

According to Pantaleo, who is built like a tank yet lightning quick, Bahna Wrestling Center also doubles as a regional training center for the Olympic circuit and senior level guys (older than 20; juniors are ages 18-20 according to USA Wrestling).

"I'm constantly getting top guys in the nation in that room," Pantaleo said. "That's who I trained with to get prepared. Those guys were training for the Olympic trials, so I was doing whatever they were doing, basically."

Step by step

Pantaleo's path to the cusp of international glory began with his hometown Chiefs, where he was an all-stater and as a senior in 2014 lost in the championship bout to Novi-Detroit Catholic Central's Myles Amine (incidentally, now a good friend and U-M teammate).

With the Wolverines, Pantaleo has upped his game up a notch — all with the ultimate goal of being an Olympian medalist in mind.

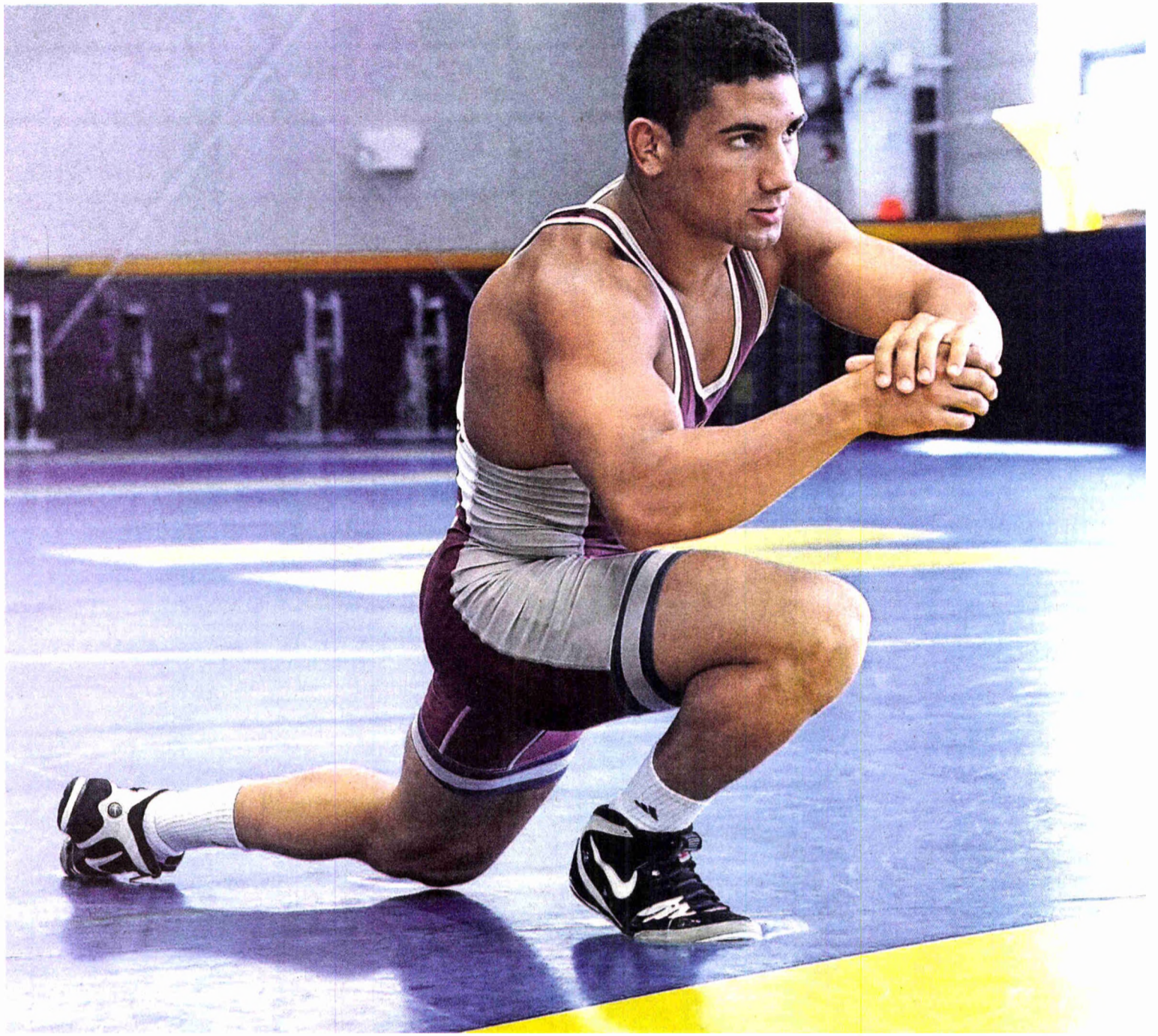
"I knew going into college that I had the kind of intangibles you can't teach, like speed and strength," Pantaleo emphasized. "Technique I knew could only get better."

"That's the one reason why I picked U-M. They saw I was athletic enough to hold my own and they taught me all the technique I know to beat the best guys in the nation."

By the way, Pantaleo also has had to overcome a partial tear of his acromioclavicular (AC) joint and a severe cut over his left eye sustained during Junior Nationals.

"A kid broke all four teeth off in my eye right here," he recalled. "And they stitched it up and wrapped my head, had the stitches in for two weeks after Junior Nationals. took them out, same day at practice blew it back open again."

"So they stitched it up and at



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Even warmups are intense for Alec Pantaleo, getting set for Tuesday's training session at Bahna Wrestling Center in Ann Arbor.

THE PANTALEO FILE

Who: Alec Pantaleo, 2014 graduate of Canton High School and entering his junior year at the University of Michigan, where he finished sixth in NCAA Division I at 149 pounds in 2015-16.

What: Pantaleo will compete from Aug. 30 through Sept. 4 on Team USA at the United World Wrestling World Junior Championships in Macon, France. To qualify, he was champion at the UWW Junior Nationals and Junior World Team Trials at 66 kilograms (145.5 pounds).

In the blood: The 20-year-old's parents are Mike and Wendy Pantaleo of Canton. He is the latest family member to enjoy major success in wrestling. Mike was a two-time All-American at Olivet College in the 1980s and in recent years was an assistant coach at Canton High School. His uncle Joe Pantaleo was a two-time finalist for Michigan in 1988 and 1989, and in 1987 was Junior World Champion. Uncle Dan Pantaleo was a NCAA wrestling champ at Olivet.

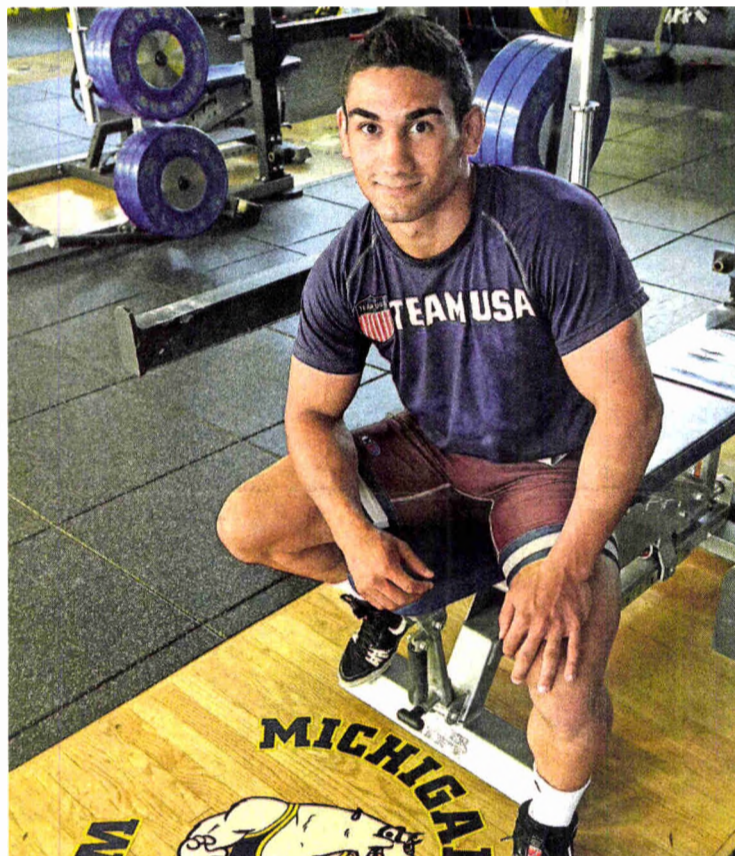
Cheering section: Pantaleo's efforts at the World Juniors will be closely followed by his former head coach at Canton, Cory Mancuso, and Chiefs teammates such as fellow 2014 alum Ben Griffin (now a wrestler at Eastern Michigan). "Coach Mancuso, he's always cheering me on. Ben Griffin, we're still good buddies."

Eye on future: After Pantaleo graduates from Michigan in 2018, he intends to turn his sights on making the 2020 U.S. Olympic wrestling team.

the World Team trials I'm like 'I can't wrestle with my head wrapped again.' I'm good to go, but my body's saying 'Whoa, whoa, slow down.'"

Hard and fast

After taking a month-long break to heal from those injuries, Pantaleo doubled down



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Canton native Alec Pantaleo also is a standout wrestler for the University of Michigan.

on training. Even when not at Bahna, he literally went the extra mile — scaling the hills at Plymouth's McClumpha Park, for example.

Of course, nothing but wrestling itself could get him ready for the test ahead, he said.

"We're big on believing if you want to get in shape for wrestling, you got to do a lot of wrestling," Pantaleo said. "Running and all that is good, but that's not what will get you in wrestling shape."

"We do a lot of grind matches, non-stop, hard-nosed, just going at it against your training partner."

gas tank, you'd put in premium gas. That's how I look at my food, I look at what's going to give me fuel?"

"I stick to carbohydrates for energy, protein, I drink at least a gallon-and-a-half of water a day, I work out twice a day. I'm very, very strict on my diet. I am a big believer that what you eat affects your performance."

To that end, Pantaleo credited his mom, Wendy, for helping him stay on task.

"My mom eats very clean, she's sort of a fitness guru in a way," he said. "She'll make the best salad you ever had."

Meanwhile, he added that a truly golden moment came after winning a spot on Team USA.

"It was great making the team and everything," Pantaleo said. "But then I saw my dad tweeted me 'I'm one proud father.' That's the stuff that matters."

Bottom line

Mike and Wendy Pantaleo will be cheering from Canton when their son is competing in France, and if Alec has anything to say they will have plenty to shout about.

"Our junior freestyle team, it's stacked," he continued. "Ten guys and all of these guys, they're good, really good."

"This is probably the best freestyle team for the junior USA that we've ever had. So we (teammates) were talking, not only are we going to bring home a lot of individual gold, but we're going to bring home team gold."

It's tough to argue that point with Alec Pantaleo, whose physical prowess is matched by an unquenchable desire to reach the pinnacle.

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VENOS

Continued from Page B1

"Philosophically, my approach is the same with the girls, although physiologically I may tailor my workouts a little differently," Venos said. "I have the same high expectations in and out of the pool for all the teams I coach."

Venos, who will be 52 next month, also has coached the Beachwood Recreation Association's summer club team for 34 years. There are 288 kids in the program, ranging in age from 4 to 18.

"I love it," he said. "Teaching these little kids how to enjoy the competitive sport of swimming is the reason I have been coaching all these years."

Venos has been a high school coach for 31 years, starting at his alma mater, Grand Blanc, in



JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Coach Mike Venos is pictured with Brother Rice captains (from left) Chris Nodland, Jack Kennedy, Mark Blinstrub and Gust Kouvaris after the Warriors won the 2015 state championship.

the 1980s and including stops at Bloomfield Hills Andover and Ferndale.

He has been at Brother Rice

for 18 seasons — the last 17 as head coach. During that time, the Warriors have won the Catholic League championship

every year and four Division 1 state titles, including the last three.

Brother Rice has compiled a dual-meet record of 144-22-1 under Venos, who has coached more than 100 all-state swimmers, including 10 individual and 11 relay state champions.

Venos, who teaches theology at Brother Rice and is the father of four, was named Coach of the Year in 2013 by the Michigan Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association.

He takes over a Mercy program that has won six state titles in the last 12 years. The Marlins will return a lot of talented individuals from a team that finished third in the Division 1 state meet behind Ann Arbor Skyline and Saline.

"Our goal is the same year in and year out, no matter what kind of talent we may have," Venos said. "We want to focus on the things we can control,

and that means just trying to swim and dive as well as we can."

"If we go into the state meet focused on that, we will be very successful. It's never been about winning; it's about being the best."

Interestingly, swimming was not the original sport of choice for Venos, who was a baseball player in his early teens.

"My dad told me, in the winter of my freshman year, I was not going to sit on the couch waiting for baseball to begin," he said. "I was cut from the basketball team and, with no swimming experience at all, joined the varsity team at Grand Blanc."

Venos began his coaching career a year after he left high school with the summer club team at Warwick Hills Golf & Country Club, site of the former Buick Open tournament.

SUMMER COLLEGIATE BASEBALL

Rams sizzling like fireworks during post-4th run

Local LCBL team strings together four-game success streak

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

Refreshed and re-energized, the Michigan Rams have emerged from a mini-post-4th-of-July break with a robust four-game winning streak.

The series of victories pushed the Rams' record to 18-6-1 in the Livonia Collegiate Baseball League.

On Sunday, head coach Rick Berryman's diamond men swept a pair of contests from the Sting in a doubleheader played at Brother Rice Field in Troy.

In Sunday's nightcap game, the Rams overcame a late 5-2 deficit by plating two runs in both the fifth and sixth innings to pull out a 6-5 triumph and make a winner out of relief pitcher Mike Kanitra (Livonia Stevenson), who hurled three innings of shutout relief. Kanitra struck out three while giving up just three harmless hits and a walk.

The Rams, who outthit the Sting 12-7, were powered by two-hit games from Tristen Jorah, who also added an RBI and two runs, Anthony DiPonio, Tyler Lowe and Alex Peczynski, who contributed a pair of RBIs.



Michigan Rams second baseman Alex Peczynski turns a double play during a game earlier this summer.

Jake Vanitvelt was the lone Sting player to record two safeties.

In Sunday's first game, Stevenson grad Jack Ferguson tossed a complete-game gem as the Rams nipped their hosts, 2-1.

Ferguson, who is a sophomore-to-be at Saginaw Valley State University, scattered

eight hits without yielding a walk. The former Spartan mound ace fanned seven Sting batters.

The winners' offense was fueled by James Hall's two-hit, one-RBI effort. Peczynski went 2-for-3 with an RBI, while Zack Schmidtke and Patrick Downing also reached on hits.

Ben Hart went 3-for-3 with

a double for the Sting.

Sting starting pitcher P.J. Callahan was a hard-luck loser after giving up just six hits and two walks over seven frames.

On July 7, the Rams started their week-long mastery of the Sting by posting a 7-2 victory in a game played at Sterling Heights Stevenson High

School.

The setback dropped the reeling Sting to 7-13-1.

Jared Tobey was the winning pitcher after holding the Sting to just one unearned run over the first four stanzas. The Sting managed just one hit off Tobey, who struck out five.

Addison Pawelek was stellar in relief for the Rams, allowing just four baserunners in three innings of work.

Jessie Rometty was the losing pitcher as the Rams exploded for six runs in the first two innings.

The bulk of the Rams' offensive firepower was provided by Lowe (2-for-3, home run, three RBI), DiPonio (2-for-4, RBI, two runs) and Hall, who delivered two hits and an RBI.

Vanitvelt stroked two singles for the Sting.

On July 6, the Rams upended the Cubs, 6-3, in a game that unfolded at Livonia's Ford Field.

Brendan Wetmore (Westland John Glenn) earned the win after limiting the Cubs to just two hits and two walks (with four strikeouts) during his 2½-innings of relief work. Ferguson picked up a save after throwing a perfect seventh inning.

Andre Gard took the loss for the Cubs despite throwing a complete game.

Eight different Rams stroked one hit a piece. The longest was launched by the bat of Lowe, who cranked a two-run home run.

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USA HOCKEY

High-energy help wanted

Plymouth-based program hiring mascot, announcer

Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Hockey lovers with a bit of flair and showmanship might want to give USA Hockey's National Team Development Program in Plymouth a call.

The program — which includes the U.S. NTDP Under-17 and Under-18 teams — is looking for somebody to don Rushmore's eagle uniform.

"With the mascot, we need somebody whose willing to put on a show, willing to have fun, that's a big part of our game day," NTDP communications and marketing manager Jake Wesolek said.

In addition, a high-energy voice is being sought to announce all the NTDP goals, assists and penalties that take place during



USA Hockey NTDP mascot Rushmore makes this young hockey fan's day during a 2015 community event.

2016-17 contests at USA Hockey Arena.

"We need somebody to come in

and pump the crowd up, have energy and kind of represent the brand," Wesolek added.

Rushmore, nicknamed Rush, has been a fixture at NTDP games both at the Ann Arbor Ice Cube and last year in Plymouth.

He often greets fans of all ages as they walk through the arena doors and kibitzes with fans throughout the game in sections and along corridors.

As for a game public address announcer, the NTDP is looking for somebody who can "engage the crowd with energetic, bold, easy to understand announcements" and work in concert with game day staff members, among other duties.

Think you have what it takes? Email Wesolek at jakew@usa-hockey.org and include a resume, cover letter and sample audio files.

tsmith@hometownlife.com
Twitter: @TimSmith Sports
Download our free apps for iPhone, iPad or Android!

from a deceased donor, the website noted.

The wait for a deceased person's kidney can also stretch over several years.

Humans require only one healthy kidney to live a full and normal life.

"Pete and I joined the program about a year and a half ago," Snell said. "We both had to undergo a series of tests, including blood and tissue evaluations. Once all the preliminary work is done, you wait and hope."

"The entire process was really a miracle of God and a miracle of medicine," Kotsogiannis added.

Snell and Kotsogiannis emphatically praised the efforts of the U of M Transplant Center, particularly Chad Abbott, who played a key role in orchestrating their successful experience.

"There's actually an entire team of people who do a lot to make this work," Kotsogiannis said. "The fact that they're able to find matches for people on the other side of the country like they did for us is just remarkable."

Individuals who may wish to consider donating a kidney should call 1-800-333-9013. Potential donors undergo tests for blood and tissue type before going through a pre-donation evaluation, which includes a nephrologist, a transplant surgeon and a social worker.

Living donors are free to confidentially withdraw from the program at any time during the donation evaluation process and are not obligated to donate.

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SPORTS ROUNDUP

Brine Academy all-star

Zoe Weber, daughter of Doug and Kim Weber of Canton, has been named as a 2016 Brine National All-Star and will represent the state of Michigan at the 2016 Brine National Lacrosse Academy and Brine National Lacrosse Classic July 19-22 in Richmond, Va.

Weber is a seventh-grader at Discovery Middle School and currently plays for Triumph Lacrosse in Wixom.

The Brine Academy brings the top youth lacrosse players in the country to one venue, where regional teams are coached by NCAA lacrosse coaches and compete to become the 2016 Brine National Champions.



Zoe Weber (left) will represent Michigan July 19-22 at the 2016 Brine National Lacrosse Academy in Richmond, Va.

Montone earns honor

University of Detroit Mercy golfer Sarah Montone has been named a Women's Golf Coaches Association All-American Scholar for the second straight year.

Montone, who played at Mercy High School, has a 3.98 GPA as a business major. She started all 10 tournaments as a junior and finished among the top two on the team in six events.

She also earned a spot on the UDM Athletic Director's Honor Roll, the Horizon League fall and spring academic honor rolls and was a member of the Horizon League spring all-academic team.

A total of 828 golfers earned the honor, including 17 from the seven Division I schools in Michigan. It is also the 19th Scholar All-American honor in the history of the Titan program.

St. Edith soccer sign-up

The St. Edith CYO fall soccer program is accepting registrations for the upcoming fall season. This program is for girls and boys entering grades 4-8 this fall and who are members of the following Catholic parishes: St. Edith, St. Colette, St. Kenneth and St. Aidan. The season goes from the second weekend in September until mid-October. To register, visit stedithcyo.com, click on the home tab, then the sports registration link and then choose soccer.

Also being offered is the Little Eagles freshman soccer program for boys and girls entering kindergarten through third grades this fall. That will be held on Saturday mornings for six weeks, with the first session being Saturday, Sept. 10. Each session will consist of a practice and a game. Visit stedithcyo.com, and follow the registration instructions listed above.

All CYO practices and home games will be at Ladywood High School. For the freshman program, all events will be at Ladywood High School. For more information about either program, contact Rich Field at 248-914-8620 or Ron Wollenweber at 248-444-2256. Or email questions to stedithsoccer@gmail.com.

Marlins need coach

Mercy High School is searching for a girls varsity ice hockey coach. Previous coaching experience is preferred.

Applicants should email a letter of intent and resume to athletic director Nancy Malinowski at nmalinowski@mhsmi.org.

The Marlins are the defending Michigan Metro Girls High School Hockey League Division 1 champions. Mercy is a member of the Catholic High School League, too.

DONATION

Continued from Page B1

dures early-stage success.

On June 21, the day the anonymous donor's kidney was surgically implanted into Snell's abdomen at the University of Michigan Hospital, the 54-year-old veteran Thurston football and baseball coach was in dire straits.

A genetic condition called polycystic kidney disease had reduced Snell's kidney function to a dangerous four-percent level, making dialysis a daunting probability.

Despite the relentless fatigue and dramatic weight loss that accelerated during the past year, Snell continued to teach and coach at Thurston — with only a few people (members of his family and his closest friends) aware of the battle he was waging.

"There's a good chance I may not have been able to coach this coming season without the transplant; or, at the very least, I probably would have missed several practices because I would have been on dialysis," noted Snell, emphasizing the exquisite timing of the procedure.

"For Pete to step up for me like he did, I mean, I can't come close to putting it into words as far as how grateful I am. The way I felt after the transplant compared to how I felt before it is like night and day.

"I feel great now. I lost 24 pounds in the past year or so (going from 165 to 141 pounds), so it was taking a toll on my body. But I've already started to gain some weight and my energy level is so

much greater."

Kotsogiannis, whose sister is married to Snell, said he didn't hesitate to volunteer for the paired donor program once he heard about the worsening condition of Snell's health.

"When you think about donating an organ in the abstract — when you ask yourself, 'Would I donate a kidney to a loved one if the need arose' — it poses kind of a dilemma in your mind, because you think about all the things that go along with it," admitted Kotsogiannis.

"But when it happened in reality, it clarified things and, for me at least, it made the decision (to donate a kidney) a no-brainer.

"I've been coaching with Bob for close to 20 years now. He's not only been a mentor, but he's been like a brother."

According to the University of Michigan Transplant Center's website, the paired donor program can greatly enhance the odds of matching up potential donors to people in need of a kidney.

The paired kidney program is offered to patients like Snell, who have a willing donor (Kotsogiannis) whose blood type isn't a viable match.

With the help of an elaborate nationwide computer network, matches are found for the program's participants and then the meticulous task of coordinating the actual transplants is coordinated between the patients' transplant centers.

The paired program is advantageous to the benefactors because living kidneys have a higher (and significantly longer) success rate compared to kidneys that are taken

Fire Protection Association pros tout sprinkler use, debunk myths

Fires in the home pose one of the biggest threats to the people of your community. An average of 367,000 home fires occur each year, killing 2,500 people. Home fire sprinklers are a proven way to protect lives and property against fires at home.

Home fire sprinklers respond quickly and effectively to the presence of a nearby fire. When sprinklers are present, they save lives.

» If you have a reported fire in your home, the risk of dying decreases by about 80 percent when sprinklers are present.

» People in homes with sprinklers are protected against significant property loss — sprinklers reduce direct property damage by about 70 percent per fire.

» Home sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce the heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving families valuable time to get to safety.

» Roughly 85 percent of the time, just one sprinkler operates.

» Each individual sprinkler is designed and calibrated to go off when it senses a significant heat change.

» Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire.

Model safety codes now require the use of home fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes. These requirements offer the highest level of safety to protect the people of your community.

When considering home fire sprinkler requirements for your community, it is important to address key myths often raised by sprinkler opponents. The fact is, because automatic sprinkler systems have been commonly used in structures for many years, the evidence is clear that such systems are a proven way to protect lives and property against fires. Sprinklers also respond quickly and effectively to the presence of a nearby fire, and function well, without creating problems for homeowners.

Home fire sprinkler myths

» "A smoke alarm provides enough protection."

» "Newer homes are safer homes; the fire and death problem is limited to older homes."

» "Home fire sprinklers are expensive and will make housing unaffordable, especially for first-time buyers moving to our area."

» "We don't need sprinkler mandates; they can be installed in homes voluntarily."

» "Home fire sprinklers often leak or activate accidentally."

» "If you want your home fire sprinklers to be reliable, they will need frequent, expensive maintenance."

» "When a fire occurs, every sprinkler will activate and everything in the house will be ruined."

» "The water damage caused by the sprinkler system will be more extensive than fire damage."

» "Home fire sprinklers are not practical in colder climates, as the pipes will freeze and cause water damage."

» "Home fire sprinklers are unattractive and will ruin the aesthetics of our residents' homes."

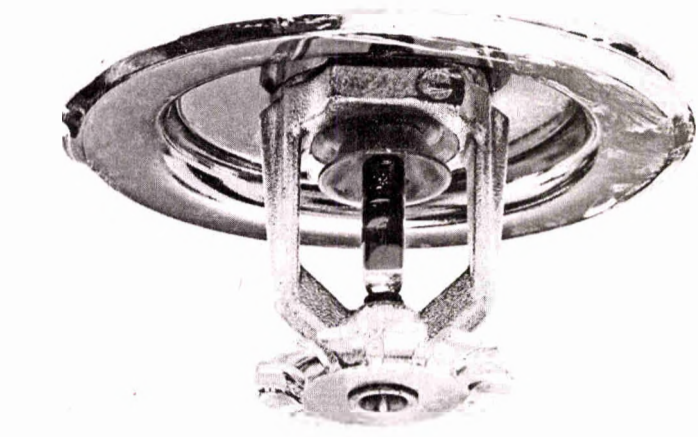
» "Any time a smoke alarm goes off it will activate the home fire sprinklers."

MYTH: "A smoke alarm provides enough protection."

Matt Klaus, NFPA's principal fire protection engineer, counters this popular myth.

FACT: Smoke alarms alert occupants to the presence of danger, but do nothing to extinguish the fire. Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames and smoke from a fire, giving residents valuable time to get out safely. Smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying if a home fire occurs by about one-third. If you have a reported fire in your home, the risk of dying decreases by about 80 percent when sprinklers are present.

Fire sprinkler opponents have been using a statistic of 99.45 percent to illustrate the effectiveness of smoke alarms in reducing home fire deaths. This NFPA statistic estimates the likelihood of surviving a



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Fire sprinklers are part of an integrated water piping system designed for life and fire safety.

home fire when a working smoke alarm is present.

A 100 percent chance of dying would mean that every fire is fatal, or, roughly, 100 deaths per 100 fires. Fortunately, that is not the case. The chances of surviving a reported home fire when working smoke alarms are present is 99.45 percent (100 minus 0.55) vs. 98.87 percent (100 minus 1.13) in home fires with no working smoke alarms. The first number is barely higher than the second.

The 99.45 percent vs. 98.87 percent statistic is based on "chances of survival" which is not the same thing as "risk of fire death" based on total number of reported fires. Chances of survival don't have much bearing in the discussion; preventing home fire death and reducing home fire death risk is the goal.

Consider this:

» Each year, over 2,300 home fire deaths occur in more than 365,000 reported structure fires. Therefore, the likelihood of surviving a home fire is approximately 99% without regard to the presence of smoke alarms or any other fire safety provisions. Does that mean 2,300 deaths are acceptable? Most people would say no.

» Each year, there are an estimated 12,000 deaths due to falls in homes and an estimated 11 million fall injuries in the home. The likelihood of surviving a fall is therefore 99.9 percent. Does that mean 12,000 deaths are acceptable? Most people would say no.

» Each year, there are an estimated 42,000 deaths due to motor vehicle crashes and an estimated 6 million reported motor vehicle crashes. The likelihood of surviving a motor vehicle crash is 99 percent. Does that mean 42,000 deaths are acceptable? Most people would say no.

MYTH: "Newer homes are safer homes; the fire and death problem is limited to older homes."

Matt Klaus, NFPA's principal fire protection engineer, counters this popular myth.

FACT: Age of housing is a poor predictor of fire death rates. When older housing is associated with higher rates, it usually is because older housing tends to have a disproportionate share of poorer, less educated households. Statistically, the only fire safety issue that is relevant to the age of the home is outdated electrical wiring. Beyond that, age of the home has little to nothing to do with fire safety. A fire at 2 a.m. is just as deadly in a new home as it is in an older home.

New methods of construction negatively impact occupant and firefighter life safety under fire conditions. The National Research Council of Canada (NRC) tested the performance of unprotected floor assemblies exposed to fire. The findings of the study, The Performance of Unprotected Floor Assemblies in Basement Fire Scenarios, assert that these structures are prone to catastrophic collapse as early as six minutes from the onset of fire.

In 2008, Underwriters Laboratories® (UL) conducted a study to identify the danger to firefighters created by the use of lightweight wood trusses and engineered lumber in residential roof and floor designs. The findings of the report, Structural Stability of

Engineered Lumber in Fire Conditions, point to the failure of lightweight engineered wood systems when exposed to fire. Firefighters expecting thirty minutes of structural integrity with dimensional wood structures face higher peril in lightweight structures.

The same UL study found that the synthetic construction of today's home furnishings add to the increased risk by providing a greater fuel load. Larger homes, open spaces, increased fuel loads, void spaces, and changing building materials contribute to: faster fire propagation; shorter time to flashover; rapid changes in fire dynamics; shorter escape time; shorter time to collapse.

Lightweight construction has been variously estimated to be used in one-half to two-thirds of all new one- and two-family homes, excluding manufactured homes. Fire sprinklers can offset the increased dangers posed by lightweight construction and create a safer fire environment for firefighters.

FREE PRESENTATION: "The Dangers of Lightweight Construction." NFPA has updated its popular Power-Point® presentation aimed at educating community's decision makers and the public about the dangers of lightweight construction materials under fire conditions.

MYTH: "Home fire sprinklers are expensive and will make housing unaffordable, especially for first-time buyers moving to our area."

Matt Klaus, NFPA's principal fire protection engineer, counters this popular myth.

FACT: The fact is that home fire sprinklers are affordable. In 2013, the Fire Protection Research Foundation issued its updated Home Fire Sprinkler Cost Assessment report, which revealed that the cost of installing home fire sprinklers averages \$1.35 per sprinklered square foot for new construction. That's down from \$1.61 per sprinklered square foot that was in the Foundation's 2008 report. To put the cost of a sprinkler system into perspective, many people pay similar amounts for carpet upgrades, a paving stone driveway, or a whirlpool bath. Sales in many U.S. communities where sprinkler systems are available show that, not only are consumers requesting this feature, but also that houses with sprinkler systems are selling faster than those without. Installing home fire sprinklers can help residents: significantly reduce property loss in the event of fire; cut homeowner insurance premiums; help qualify home for a tax rebate; and help support local fire service efforts.

MYTH: "We don't need sprinkler mandates; they can be installed in homes voluntarily."

FACT: Mandating sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes provides a greater overall level of safety in communities. By requiring these life-saving devices in new homes you are ensuring that a large number of residents can enjoy the same level of safety found in many offices, schools, apartments, and public buildings.

Beyond the life safety benefits of home sprinklers, there are other incentives for jurisdictions that mandate

sprinklers in new homes. By mandating sprinkler requirements, cities and towns can reduce the strain on fire service personnel, limit damage to property, and help conserve municipal water resources by reducing the amount of water needed to fight fires (fire-fighting hoses use more than eight times the amount of water used by automatic fire sprinklers).

MYTH: "Home fire sprinklers often leak or activate accidentally."

FACT: Leaks from automatic sprinkler systems are very rare, and no more likely than leaks from any part of a home's plumbing system. It is also rare for a damaged sprinkler system to release water, and when it happens, it is almost never an accident. Vandalism or misuse are typically involved. Furthermore, a sprinkler will not activate from exposure to a burning match or any likely event in the house other than a significant, unwanted fire.

MYTH: "If you want your home fire sprinklers to be reliable, they will need frequent, expensive maintenance."

FACT: The standard design for home fire sprinklers is much simpler than the design for more traditional sprinklers like the ones used in commercial buildings. If you install a home fire sprinkler system, the only "inspection and maintenance" you will need is to (a) walk around your home and make sure the sprinklers are not obstructed by something that would block the water coming out, and (b) avoid turning off the main control valve, which you don't normally operate anyway.

MYTH: "When a fire occurs, every sprinkler will activate and everything in the house will be ruined."

FACT: In the event of a fire, typically, only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire, leaving the rest of the house dry and secure. Roughly 85 percent of the time, just one sprinkler operates.

MYTH: "The water damage caused by the sprinkler system will be more extensive than fire damage."

Matt Klaus, NFPA's principal fire protection engineer, counters this popular myth.

FACT: Home fire sprinklers can significantly reduce property loss and damage due to a fire. The sprinkler will quickly control the heat and smoke from the fire, limiting damage to other areas of the house, giving residents valuable time to get out safely. Any resulting water damage from the sprinkler will be much less severe than the damage caused by water from fire-fighting hose lines. Fire departments use up to 10 times as much water to extinguish a home fire as fire sprinklers would use to extinguish the same fire.

MYTH: "Home fire sprinkler systems are not practical in colder climates, as the pipes will freeze and cause water damage."

Matt Klaus, NFPA's principal fire protection engineer, counters this popular myth.

FACT: With proper installation, home sprinkler systems will not freeze in cold settings. NFPA13D sets forth guidelines on proper insulation to avoid pipes freezing. The Chicago area is a great example of a cold weather region where many jurisdictions have passed sprinkler mandates for new homes with limited to no problems with systems freezing.

MYTH: "Home fire sprinkler systems are unattractive and will ruin the aesthetics of our residents' homes."

FACT: New home fire sprinkler models are very unobtrusive, can be mounted flush with walls or ceilings, and can be concealed behind decorative covers.

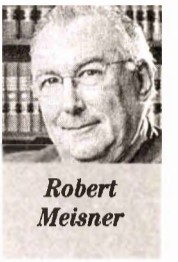
MYTH: "Any time a smoke alarm goes off it will activate the home fire sprinklers."

FACT: Each individual sprinkler is designed and calibrated to activate when it senses a significant heat change. They do not operate in response to smoke, burned toast, cooking vapors, steam, or an activating smoke alarm.

Call condo board meeting, discuss concerns promptly

Q: Our condo association has been taken over by a group of people who want to undo everything that has occurred at our condominium, including our administrator, our legal counsel and any contractors with whom we are dealing. What can we do to stop this?

A: Assuming that you are correct in that the members of the board are not leading the association in the right direction, you should immediately gather



Robert Meisner

a petition to remove the Board of Directors by having a special meeting called to do so presumably in accordance with your condominium by-laws. Another option is for the co-owners to file a legal proceeding in Circuit Court to remove the directors from office. Generally, this action requires at least 10 percent of the co-owners to sign a petition to bring the action. For removal to be successful, the court will need to find that the directors engaged in fraudulent, illegal, or dishonest conduct, or gross abuse of authority or discretion, and that removal is in the best interest of the association. In any event, you should make it clear by retaining an attorney to advise the existing board of their failures and potential liability for mismanagement of the condominium.

Q: We own some property that was foreclosed upon and our lawyer is telling us to tender payment in order to redeem the property within the six month period. I feel somewhat uncomfortable about that. Do you have any comments?

A: Yes, you probably need a new lawyer, because the relevant statute provides that a sheriff's deed obtained at a sheriff's sale is void if the property is redeemed by paying the amount required within the applicable time limit prescribed to the purchaser or the purchaser's representative or assigns or to the register of deeds in whose office the deed is deposited for the benefit of the purchaser. Simply stated, actual payment of the funds is required and your lawyer's assertions that you can properly tender the funds will not satisfy the state statute's payment requirement.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of "Condo Living 2: An Authoritative Guide to Buying, Selling and Operating a Condominium." He is also the author of "Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track," second edition. Visit bmeisner@meisner-law.com. This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

Benefit Estate Sale

Hall & Hunter Realtors will hold its 13th annual Estate Sale of Antiques, Collectibles and Treasures to benefit Habitat for Humanity of Oakland County. It will be held Saturday, Sept. 10, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Hall & Hunter Realtors, 442 S. Old Woodward Ave. in Birmingham.

All year long, Hall & Hunter Realtors collect antiques, gently used furniture and collectibles. Since Hall & Hunter started this tradition 11 years ago, the firm has donated \$250,000 to Habitat for Humanity of Oakland County. Sponsored by: Changing Places Moving Company, Devon Title Agency, Stefek's Auctioneers & Appraisers, Bank of Birmingham. Visit HallandHunter.com or call 248-644-3500.

Free foreclosure tours

Free foreclosure tours are 1 p.m. every other Sunday. Meeting place is Panera Bread on the southeast corner of Middlebelt and I-96.

Email Georgia@addedvalue-realty.com or visit www.FreeForeclosureTour.com.

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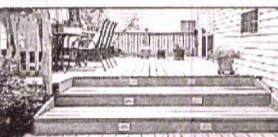
Deadlines: Friday at 4pm for Sunday
 Tuesday at 3pm for Thursday

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IN THE O&E CLASSIFIEDS

Great Buys Garage Sales
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Estate Sales

Canton Liquidation Store Sale
 4235 Old Canton Center Rd. Thurs.-Sat. July 14-16th 9am-5pm Sun. July 17th 10am-4pm Beautiful new area rugs-both hand & machine made selling at deep discount prices. Rugs from Egypt, India, China, Iran, Pakistan, & Turkey. Selling modern to traditional styles. New high end leather sofas & chairs, unique tables for all occasions, lamps, side chairs, foosball table, everything Must go! Great prices-All new items! For info Call Ron 248-298-2770

LIVONIA Round 3 ESTATE SALE
 4 DAYS 18221 Loveland St. Thurs-Sun 9am-5pm (E. off Farmington Rd., S. of 7 Mile Rd.) Furniture, Antiques, Collectibles-LOADED! See pics at actionestate.com 586-228-9090

Northville Estate Sale at Kings Mill
 18278 Jamstown Circle Thurs. 7/14 Sat. 7/16 10am-4pm

Plymouth Indoor/outdoor Estate Sale
 60 yrs of packed house & garage. Antiques & collectibles from 1960's & earlier. This is a Fabulous Sale-Do Not Miss! Reasonable prices. Fri. & Sat. 10am-4pm 11677 Francis For pics & info go to estatesales.net

White Lake - 1250 Dalane Blvd Truck, tools, furn. & household items. July 14th-16th Thurs 9-5, Fri 9-6, & Sat 9-2

Garage-Tag Sale

Canton - Moving Sale - Royal Holiday
 PK 39500 Warren #428. July 14-16th 10-6p Furn., dishes, linen, tools, & Misc.

Farmington Hills 32418 Old Franklin Dr. Middlebelt & 14 mile rd. July 14-15th 9-5p Adult & kids clothing, toys, jewelry, Household, Kitchen & more.

LIVONIA - A Minton Street Medley
 Thomas Train pieces, high-end halloween costumes, large men jeans, childrens clothes and toys, large ladies clothes, 1 block E. of Middlebelt 2 Str. S of W Chicago. Thurs-Sat July 14-16th 8am-4pm. 29549 Minton St.

LIVONIA - Fri., July 15 & Sat., July 16th, 9-4pm: Furniture, clothing, household items, misc. 34190 Bretton Dr., N of 7 Mile & E. of Gill.

Livonia Huge Yard Sale Thurs. 7/14-Sat. 7/16 9am-6pm 14795 Melrose
 Something for everyone!

Garage-Tag Sale

Livonia Rummage Sale
 Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 7 Mile, 1/2 mile west of Farmington Rd. Thurs-Fri, July 14-15, 8am-4pm, Sat July 16 8am - noon

NOVI-Multi condo Island Lake Dr. off Wixom. Fri-Sat. 9-5pm. New items, something for everyone- Great buys!

Redford Thurs - Sun. 9a-5p Guitar, cameras, furniture, crafts & more! 11415 San Jose (Inkster & Plymouth)

SOUTH LYON - Antiques, singer sewing machine, dining room table and four chairs, queen sleigh bed, collectibles, smalls, paper weights and musical instruments. 9216 WILD OAK CIR. W off ruston N of 10 mi. 9a-5p Thursday-Saturday July 14-16th.

Westland-Covington Estates HUGE
 Sub wide Sale Thurs. 7/14 Sat. 7/16 9am-5pm Off Glenwood between Newburgh & Hix- Large assortment!

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Domestic Pets



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	NMLS#		30 Yr.	Pts.	15 Yr.	Pts.
1st Choice Mortgage Lending	138560	(734) 459-0782	3.375	0	2.625	0
Accurate Mortgage Solutions	164511	(800) 593-1912	3.375	0	2.625	0
AFI Financial	2431	(877) 234-0600	3.375	0	2.625	0
Ameriplus Mortgage Corp.	127931	(248) 740-2323	3.375	0	2.5	0
Dearborn Federal Savings Bank	399721	(313) 565-3100	3.625	0	2.875	0
Fifth Third Bank	403245	(800) 792-8830	3.375	0	2.875	0
Ross Mortgage	107716	(248) 282-1602	3.625	0	2.875	0
Zeal Credit Union	408356	(734) 466-6113	3.5	0.25	2.875	0

Above Information available as of 6/30/16 and subject to change at anytime. Rates are based on a \$200,000 loan with 20% down & credit score of 740 or above. Jumbo rates, specific payment calculation & most current rates available Fridays after 2:00 P.M. at www.rmcreport.com.

All Lenders are Equal Opportunity Lenders. Lenders to participate call (734) 922-3032

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